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ABSTRACT

This study examines through Conversation Analysis (CA) the way requests for action are interactionally accomplished in naturally occurring spontaneous conversation, and uses the findings as the basis for an evaluation of the way requests are presented in published English language teaching (ELT) materials. The following areas are discussed: (1) the general implications of a CA approach to conversational interaction for ELT; (2) the implications of a CA approach to requests for notions of appropriateness; (3) what constitutes a request; and (4) request and pre-request sequences in the CA literature. It is demonstrated that there is no overt orientation in any of the instructional materials examined to the kind of interactional issues discussed. However, some materials provide implicit models of how conversational interaction is accomplished. Appended materials include extracts of research data, an evaluation sheet, and references and a bibliography. (JL)

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THE IMPLICATIONS OF A CONVERSATION ANALYSIS APPROACH TO REQUEST SEQUENCES FOR ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHING

submitted in partial fulfillment of the degree of MA

by Pamela J Scott

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Dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of
MA in Linguistics and English Language Teaching

SUBMITTED BY: PAMELA J SCOTT

SEPTEMBER 1987

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THE IMPLICATIONS OF A CONVERSATION ANALYSIS APPROACH TO REQUEST SEQUENCES FOR ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHING

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

The aim of this dissertation is to examine the way 'requests for action' are interactionally accomplished in naturally occurring spontaneous conversation, and to use the findings from this analysis as the basis for an evaluation of the way requests are presented (either explicitly or implicitly) in published English language teaching (ELT) materials. As with other studies that have compared instances of natural conversation with the kind of conversational exchanges presented in ELT materials (such as Richards' work on answers to Yes/No questions (1977) and Crystal & Davy's pioneering 'Advanced Conversational English' (1975)), the expectation here is that there will be considerable mismatch between the two. What I also hope to establish in the course of this investigation is an empirically based interactional framework for the 'doing' of requests that will have practical applications in ELT.

THE GENERAL IMPLICATIONS OF A CA APPROACH TO CONVERSATIONAL INTERACTION FOR ELT

Before looking in detail at the specific implications of a Conversation Analysis (CA) approach to request sequences for ELT, I should like to discuss some of the general points which arise from a CA approach

to conversational interaction and the possible applications of these to ELT.

Given the emphasis on authentic materials that has existed within ELT for the past ten years or so, it seems ironic that Applied Linguists have paid so little attention to the extremely authentic interaction being studied by Conversation Analysts and the findings coming from that field. These findings demonstrate distinct patterns of conversational interaction (such as upgrading assessments to show agreement - Pomerantz 1984a) which seem to me finally to provide something that has been seriously lacking in ELT up till now, namely an empirical basis for any claims made regarding what actually happens in conversational interaction.

The methodological approach adopted in CA insists on tape-recorded instances of naturally occurring spontaneous conversation as the raw data for analysis, rejecting techniques such as interviewing, observation, experimentation and the use of native speaker intuitions as unsatisfactory sources of data as they all lead to idealizations about the way conversational interaction takes place (see Atkinson & Heritage 1984 pp 2-5 and Heritage 1984c pp 234-238 for a detailed discussion of these points). 'Spontaneous' conversation refers to the fact that the co-participants are not consciously monitoring their linguistic or interactional behaviour, and the prime advantage of using tape recordings (audio or video) is that the data can be repeatedly re-examined in its raw form. Anyone who has ever worked with recorded conversational data will know how inadequate (and inaccurate) subjective recollections can be: Heritage terms the use of recorded data

> 'an essential corrective to the limitations of intuition and recollection'
>
> (Heritage 1984c p238)

The implications for ELT of a CA approach to conversational interaction are profound: virtually all conversational exchanges in commercially available ELT materials are inventions based on native speaker intuitions, a technique which CA has shown to be limited and unreliable in reproducing conversational interaction with any degree of accuracy. However, raw CA data itself could not easily be used for ELT purposes, and so the problem that remains is essentially one of evaluation: what is the yardstick against which models of interaction (explicit and implicit) in ELT materials can be measured for authenticity? This is one area in particular where I feel findings from CA can have a direct application to ELT, by providing the necessary empirical basis for materials evaluation aimed specifically at determining the degree of authenticity of invented conversational interaction. The advantage of this approach to materials design is that the students would no longer be presented with examples of conversations that are essentially inaccurate and potentially misleading. Crystal makes this very point:

> 'I wish to argue that ... we (theoretical linguist and language teacher) have been operating for too long with a stereotyped notion of "everyday conversation", an ideal of conversational usage which is so far removed from the actualities of everyday speech that it becomes a hindrance instead of a help when presented in the form of materials to the advanced learner.'
>
> (Crystal 1981 p90 - emphasis added)

I personally feel that this 'stereotyped notion of "everyday conversation"' can be a hindrance at all levels; the approach I am advocating here is one that would address this problem and could be integrated into materials design at any level.

There are two further points that need to be made in connection with the general implications of a CA approach for ELT. Firstly, despite the

use of authentic materials in ELT (defined in ELT terms as being produced by native speakers for native speakers), few students, particularly overseas, have the opportunity to observe naturally occurring spontaneous interaction between native speakers. The kind of interaction found in authentic materials is usually scripted to a greater or lesser degree, and seldom even seeks to reproduce spontaneous interaction. Often these materials take the form of off-air recordings (particularly documentaries or interviews), excellent for improving certain aspects of what Wilkins has termed a student's 'receptive competence' (Wilkins 1976 p79), but of very little use to any student trying to establish the groundrules for everyday conversational interaction in English. Again, findings from CA can provide the means for evaluation of the degree of authenticity of conversational interaction in any such material, and can demonstrate that what are referred to in ELT as 'authentic' materials cannot necessarily be assumed to be providing models of authentic spontaneous conversational interaction.

The second point, closely related to the above, is that even if the material presented to students approximates to authentic spontaneous conversational interaction (as can happen with a particularly good script-writer, or when material has been semi-scripted and professional actors improvise the actual details (as in the more advanced units of Macmillan's 'Video English' (1983)), there is usually no attempt to highlight explicitly the way native speakers accomplish interactional goals, an analysis that would not only help language students but would also benefit teachers: native speaker teachers seldom have an analytical awareness of their own language; non-native speakers, in the absence of any previous such analysis, are in much the same position with the added disadvantage of being unable to fall back on native speaker intuition when all else fails. It cannot simply be assumed that language students will

transfer interactional strategies from one language to another, nor can it be assumed that the same strategies are equally appropriate in different languages or cultures (see for example Thomas 1983). For these reasons in particular, I feel that an explicit analysis of such interactional strategies (to be used descriptively rather than prescriptively) would be of benefit to all concerned: students, teachers and materials designers alike.

THE IMPLICATIONS OF A CA APPROACH TO REQUESTS FOR NOTIONS OF APPROPRIATENESS

This brings me onto the question of appropriateness and why requests have been chosen as the specific locus of investigation in this study. Appropriateness is traditionally defined as the choice of linguistic form according to (social) situational constraints (see for example Crystal 1985 p20; Crystal & Davy 1975 p110). From my own experience of teaching EFL, I know that 'requests for action' (to be defined fully in the next section) are one area in particular where students (also teachers and materials designers) come up against the question of what exactly constitutes an appropriate utterance. One of the reasons why requests are so problematic in this respect is that they constitute what Brown & Levinson have termed 'face threatening acts' (FTAs) (Brown & Levinson 1978 pp 71-3), and a major problem seems to be that no matter how hard one tries to fulfill all the criteria and take into account the affective variables which are thought to govern linguistic choice (such as role-relationship, size of task and so on), the resultant request can often still seem somehow lacking in appropriateness to a native speaker. It seemed to me that CA should be

able to shed some light on this problem, and the impetus for the current line of inquiry came when I discovered a passing reference to Sacks' observation that requests are a dispreferred conversational activity (cited in Schegloff 1979 p49), a remark that seemed to me to have far-reaching implications for the way requests are handled in ELT: if requests are dispreferred, then the production of a request might in itself be inappropriate at times, and would therefore be subject to certain constraints regarding its use.

The analysis outlined in Schegloff's article states that because of the preference organization operating between requests and offers as alternative first pair parts of adjacency pairs (qv Schegloff & Sacks 1973 pp 295-6), a pre-request sequence can often prompt an offer from the recipient, obviating the need for the dispreferred request sequence (Schegloff 1979 p49). This analysis suggests that the constraints referred to in the previous paragraph operating on the production of a request first pair part could be primarily to do with what Schegloff has elsewhere termed the 'sequential context' of the utterance (Schegloff ms), the sequential context of the request being a crucial factor in determining its appropriateness, and a pre-request sequence being an integral feature of this 'appropriate' sequential context.

This gave me the starting point for the data analysis undertaken in this dissertation, looking for empirical evidence to support both this interactional pattern (particularly as I have been unable to trace Sacks' own (1967/72?) work on request and pre-request sequences) and the claim I have made regarding the importance of sequential context in determining the appropriateness of request first pair parts.

There also seems to be a broader implication here in that one aspect of appropriateness might not simply be which particular linguistic items

are chosen to realise a given illocutionary function, but how an utterance is sequentially positioned in the conversation: although much is talked about situational context, I have never seen any reference to sequential context as a possible determining factor in the appropriateness of an utterance. Pre-sequences can play a large part in orienting conversational participants to projected sequences (see for example Schegloff 1980; Terasaki 1976) and it seems to me that the appropriateness of any utterance could have much to do with its sequential placement and the overall conversation structure.

Preference organization also seems to have implications for general notions of what might constitute an appropriate utterance. Wootton, talking about preference organization for dispreferred conversational activities such as disagreement and non-grantings of requests, argues:

> 'Although such preference organizations are sometimes consigned to the domain of 'politeness', what is increasingly clear ... is that the management of such a domain is systematically tuned so as to enable people to accomplish various interactional concerns in co-ordinated ways. Although such organizations may be marginal to traditional linguistic concerns, they are hardly marginal to the concerns of the interactants.'
>
> (Wootton 1981a p83)

I think the last comment is particularly true when the interactants are non-native speakers of English trying to establish certain groundrules for appropriate conversational interaction, and if (as Wootton states) this domain is 'systematically tuned', then this should be a feasible objective for language learners.

To conclude this section, there appear to be two general issues relating to appropriateness that arise from a CA approach to conversational interaction in the management of requests (as put forward by Sacks). The first is that the concept of appropriateness might need to embrace the

question of whether a particular sequence-type is itself appropriate in any given context, and the second is that sequential context could well be a major determining feature in the appropriateness of any utterance, this second point being of course of crucial relevance to the definition of 'context' in the first.

PROBLEMS OF DEFINITION: WHAT CONSTITUTES A REQUEST?

As this study focuses on the way 'requests for action' (hereafter 'requests') are interactionally accomplished in conversation, a definition is needed which is based on interactional rather than linguistic criteria. Schegloff (ms) has argued that the interpretation of utterances in conversation cannot be adequately described by speech act analysis, partly because

> 'speech act theory has inherited from traditional philosophy the single act or utterance as its fundamental unit'
> (Schegloff ms p12)

and also because

> 'What a rudimentary speech act theoretic analysis misses, and I suspect a sophisticated one will miss as well, is that parties to real conversations are always talking in some sequential context.'
> (Schegloff op cit p 11)

Sequential context has already been mentioned in connection with appropriateness; having acknowledged its importance in the interactional management of conversation however, I should like to add that I feel pragmatic analyses also have a contribution to make to our understanding of interaction, as for example when there is an unequal power base (Thomas

1985b), and one of the aims of this study is to attempt to incorporate elements from both approaches.

Within the ethnomethodological tradition, it is the participants' own categories that provide the interpretative framework for analysis:

> 'We have proceeded under the assumption (an assumption borne out by our research) that insofar as the materials we worked with exhibited orderliness, they did so not only for us, indeed not in the first place for us, but for the co-participants who had produced them ... it was a feature of the conversations that we treated as data that they were produced so as to allow the display by the co-participants to each other of their orderliness, and to allow the participants to display to each other their analysis, appreciation and use of that orderliness.'
>
> (Schegloff & Sacks 1973 p290)

The implications of this approach to the data in this study are that unless the co-participants themselves demonstrably orient to an utterance as a request, or as projecting a request, there can be no claim that a request was made or intended. One source of evidence for this specific orientation would be for example a commitment from one co-participant to do something mentioned or alluded to in a previous turn by the other.

This in itself still begs a definition of the term 'request', and what I should like to propose is one which makes reference to the interactional objectives of the initiating participant. Before doing this, however, I should like to take a brief look at the way requests are defined linguistically.

Despite the extensive literature on the subject, precise definitions of the term 'request' are conspicuous by their absence, and the only attempts I have come across to give the term any kind of definition are the traditional ELT 'functional' categories of 'asking someone to do something' (as in Harmer & Arnold 1978 p93) and various paraphrases of this (see for example Abbs & Freebairn 1979 p49; Boardman & di Giuliomaria 1982 p76;

Morrow & Johnson 1979 p66). (I have however found directives referred to as 'verbal power attempts' (Kirsh 1983 p269).) There seems to be within much of the literature an assumption that illocutionary verbs (and the corresponding terms used for illocutionary force) are self-explanatory and warrant no further comment, a problem that Leech refers to as:

> 'the error of "grammaticizing" pragmatic force'
> (Leech 1983 p174)

which arises from what he terms the 'illocutionary-verb fallacy':

> 'The "illocutionary-verb fallacy" is the view that the analysis of illocutionary force can be suitably approached through the analysis of the meaning of illocutionary verbs such as "advise", "command" and "promise".'
> (Leech op cit p174)

adding later that:

> 'illocutionary force ... is more subtle than can be easily accommodated by our everyday vocabulary of speech-act verbs'
> (Leech op cit p175)

It seems then that this problem of definition arises at least partly from the fact that linguistic metalanguage (certainly within pragmatics and speech act theory) is not adequately distinguished from this 'everyday vocabulary of speech-act verbs'.

Within speech act theory, Searle's alternative taxonomy of illocutionary acts (Searle 1979 pp 12-20) identifies the category of 'directives', defined as:

> 'attempts (of varying degrees ...) by the speaker to get the hearer to do something'
> (Searle 1979 p13)

Although this definition of directive seems at first to match the

interactional objective of a request, it soon becomes obvious that this is too broad a definition for this purpose. Included in Searle's directive category are the illocutionary verbs 'request', 'command' and 'order' (pertinent to this inquiry), as well as others such as 'invite' and 'advise'. What is needed then is a way of distinguishing between these which allows interactional definitions to be established. Leech suggests (see below) that factors such as the amount of choice given to the addressee (H) and the relative cost or benefit of an action A to speaker (S) and H (his 'cost-benefit scale' (see Leech 1983 p107)) can provide 'non-categorical, scalar terms' (op cit p175) for analyzing illocutionary force. With particular reference to 'requesting', 'ordering' and 'offering', he argues:

> 'the difference between 'ordering' and 'requesting' is partly a matter of the scale of optionality (how much choice is given to H), and the difference between 'requesting' and 'offering' is a matter of the cost-benefit scale (how far is A to the cost/benefit of S/H).'
>
> (Leech 1983 p175)

It seems to me that these factors of optionality and cost/benefit to S/H could well be relevant to my own investigation of interactional requests.

The concept of a cost/benefit scale, if 'cost' can be taken here to include 'action', provides a basis for the necessary distinction between definitions of 'requesting', 'inviting' and 'advising' which all fall into Searle's 'directive' category (and could further be used as a general means of systematizing categories of illocutionary function). However, I do not see cost/benefit as a single linear scale, but rather as two independent scales of cost (to S or H) and benefit (to S or H), and it is this interpretation that I propose to use here.

'Advising someone to do something' (as an illocutionary function)

can be defined in terms of H action/cost, H benefit. 'Requesting an action' can be similarly defined in terms of H action/cost, but S benefit seems too narrow: the beneficiary of a requested action could be S alone (is this what constitutes a "favour"?), but could also be S + H, S + H + others, or some third party (see Ervin-Tripp 1976 pp 31-2). It seems that the essential determining factor here is that the beneficiary is not H singly, although H can be included in multi-party beneficiaries. Despite the problems of representing this, I shall refer to this as non-H benefit. It should also be pointed out that H action/cost refers (for my purposes at least) to the interactional agent rather than the linguistic one, as for example in 'Could I borrow...', where because of the semantic meaning entailed in the word 'borrow', the linguistic agent is not the interactional agent but the beneficiary. It would be interesting to see from CA data whether any preference organization operates between interactional equivalents such as these: one would imagine that because of the apparent (?) increased FTA in the use of a linguistically explicit interactional agent, such utterances might be relatively dispreferred to those in which the interactional agent was not linguistically explicit.

'Inviting someone to do something' and 'suggesting a joint course of action' are more problematic as both S and H are then committed to some future course of action. Hancher (1979) and Leech (1983) both set these kinds of illocutionary functions apart from those such as requesting and advising (where the action/cost is unequivocally H's): Hancher argues that they comprise:

> 'hybrid speech acts that combine directive with commissive illocutionary force'
>
> (Hancher 1979 p6)

and therefore refers to them as 'commissive directives' (op cit p6).

Following a similar line of argument, Leech identifies 'competitive' and 'convivial' illocutionary functions and notes that whereas most directives belong to the competitive category (involving negative politeness), some directives (such as invitations) fall into the convivial category (involving positive politeness) (Leech 1983 pp 104-7). This suggests that both 'inviting' and 'suggesting' should be represented as S + H action/ cost (and possibly H benefit and S + H benefit respectively; if not, this begs the question of how (or whether in fact) they differ) which sets them apart from 'requesting' and 'advising'. It seems then that Leech's cost-benefit scale (with a few modifications) can function as a workable basis for distinguishing between different illocutionary functions by providing some insight into the interactional objectives of the initiating participant.

As the distinction between 'request' and 'order' has been argued to be (partly) one of optionality (see page 11), I do not propose to distinguish between them in my initial data search. The definition that I propose to work with is one that I feel has to be in terms of the interactional objective of the initiating conversational participant: I shall therefore define a request sequence-type as one in which the interactional objective of the initiating participant is demonstrably (in CA terms) to get the co-participant to perform an action which is for the benefit of someone other than the co-participant alone. Time can be a modifying factor here: the immediate objective may be for the requested action to be performed at the time of speaking, or it may be to extract a commitment from the co-participant to carry out the requested action at some later point.

REQUEST AND PRE-REQUEST SEQUENCES IN THE CA LITERATURE

Request and pre-request sequences have not received a great deal of attention in the CA literature: Sacks' analysis (cited in Schegloff 1979 p49) has already been mentioned (see page 6); Schegloff apparently discusses pre-requests in an unpublished lecture (Schegloff 1977, cited in Heritage 1984d p9) but I have been unable to trace this; Wootton has done considerable work on requests in child language (Wootton 1981a, 1981b, 1984) but noted six years ago that

> 'no general and systematic analysis of adult-adult request sequences is available'
>
> (Wootton 1981a p85 n3)

and the situation seems little changed since then; Levinson (1983 pp356-64) has used CA findings on pre-request sequences to produce what Heritage has called 'a new and compelling account of indirect speech acts' (Heritage 1984d p9) but this is not a CA analysis per se; Davidson (1984) includes requests in her study of subsequent versions of conversational objects following potential or actual rejection, but the focus of the analysis is not on how such objects are interactionally managed in the first instance; Merritt's (1976) work on service encounters, defined as

> 'an instance of face-to-face interaction between a server who is "officially posted" in some service area and a customer who is present in that service area, that interaction being oriented to the satisfaction of the customer's presumed desire for some service and the server's obligation to provide that service'
>
> (Merritt 1976 p321)

although providing some useful data on requests and pre-requests in that particular situation is nevertheless not a CA study but is essentially discourse-based, and furthermore the data referred to in her article is a

mixture of tape-recorded and 'hand recorded' (Merritt op cit p322) (ie observation-based) material, no indication being given of which is which, which should therefore be treated with some caution from a CA point of view.

As far as Wootton's work on requests in child language is concerned, I feel that although some of the issues he raises (such as the use of 'please' in request sequences (Wootton 1984)) may ultimately be very relevant to this current inquiry, initially at least his studies have only a limited application to this one: he uses a broader (though unstated) definition of 'request' to include sequences in which the interactional objective of the initiator is S action, S benefit (traditionally referred to linguistically as 'requests for permission') rather than that which I am concerned with here which is exclusively H action, non-H benefit. Although I would predict (on the basis of a preliminary glance at the data) that in child requests the beneficiary (in either instance) is usually S, the crucial distinction that I wish to make here is whether the requested action is to be performed by S or H (because of the face-threatening nature of the former and the implications of this for the interaction).

A second point is that the asymmetric power balance in adult-child interaction, together with notions of what constitutes socially acceptable linguistic behaviour from a child (as evidenced for example in an adult's insistence on a child's use of 'please' (see Wootton 1984 extracts (12) p150 and (18) p153)) can be shown to have particular implications for the conversational interaction in child -> adult request sequences (Wootton 1981a, 1984). (Indeed, the use of the term 'granting' for a favourable response to a request (Wootton 1981a) itself predicates this power imbalance; in my analysis I shall use the more neutral term 'compliance'.) What I am concerned with however is how adults routinely accomplish

requests in adult-adult interaction (and power balance may well be a determining factor here), the target 'interactional competence' (McTear 1985) which children eventually acquire.

(Once an analysis of adult-adult interaction in request sequences is established, it would be very interesting to trace the development of the way children manage interactional requests as they approximate more closely to the adult model, as this could provide particular insights into our notions of interactional 'appropriateness'. Furthermore, the asymmetric power relationship in child-adult interaction could provide useful parallels for other interaction in which there is imbalance of power. Kirsh (1983 p269), writing about the use of directives by pre-school children, uses the following quotation to make this same point:

> 'Comparison of patterns of communication between and within unequal groups ... may suggest useful paradigms for understanding the exercise of power in everyday life'
> (Kramer, Thorne & Henley 1978 p643)

and I think this line of further investigation could prove rewarding.)

One point arising from Wootton's (1984) analysis of child requests that provides a specific line of inquiry for my study is the following observation on grantings constructed as concessionary:

> 'In proposing, through the design of the request, that recipient could have some basis for being unwilling to grant it, this, in turn, makes relevant a particular form of granting if recipient should choose to grant the request. Namely, a granting constructed as concessionary. For in granting the request recipient would be granting it in spite of a possible basis for being unwilling to grant it. The classic concessionary granting form is 'Allright', though it is not only usable subsequent to this type of sequence initial request construction'
> (Wootton 1984 p157 n8 - emphasis added)

Whether or not adults similarly propose through the design of a request

(and recipients through the design of the response) that the recipient may have some basis for being unwilling to grant it (as opposed to being unable to grant it, which has been argued to be a main issue addressed in pre-requests (Levinson 1983 pp 357-8)) has yet to be determined. However, a related question which also refers back to notions of power structure in interaction and which I feel may be more pertinent to this inquiry is the extent to which the initiating participant expects the recipient to comply with the request; I shall refer to this as the 'compliance status' of the request. This expectation may be based on a number of pragmatic or sociological factors (such as role relationship, power structure and perceptions of relative rights and obligations) but what this notion of 'compliance status' aims to do is to focus these factors into recipient design (cf Bell's (1984) notion of 'audience design'). The compliance status of a request could be 'expected compliance' (C), an open question (O) or 'expected non-compliance' (N), and from the above argument I would expect to find concessionary-type compliance tokens (such as 'all right') in cases where the compliance status is (N). This provides another line of investigation for the data analysis.

Wootton also makes a distinction between 'nongrantings', 'refusals' and 'rejections', nongrantings being responses which do not grant exactly what the child has requested, refusals being those containing the explicit negative token 'no' and rejections (a looser category) being nongrantings constructed in explicitly negative turns but without the overt refusal particle 'no' (Wootton 1981a p85 n5). The distinction between such non-compliance responses will be borne in mind in the data analysis here, although I would predict far fewer instances of explicit negative responses in adult-adult interaction, or at least in cases where there is no power factor.

Apart from Wootton's work, I have found no other CA studies that concentrate specifically on request sequences. Pre-requests however are often mentioned in the literature on pre-sequences generally (Sacks 1967, 1972, 1974; Schegloff 1968, 1979, 1980 and ms; Terasaki 1976 pp 12-15; Heringer 1977; Levinson 1983 pp 345-364; Heritage 1984d p9). As a pre-sequence type, pre-requests can be characterized as follows:

> 'Pre-sequences are sequences produced to be specifically preliminary to determinate actions, projecting their occurrence, contingent on the response to the pre-sequence initiator'
>
> (Schegloff ms p6)

The use of a pre-request sequence is motivated by several considerations: refusing a request has been shown to be a dispreferred conversational activity (Levinson 1983 pp 307-8) which means that the production of a request first pair part can be seriously face-threatening if there is any possibility that the recipient cannot comply with the request.

(1) (25) 176B
C: Um I wondered if there's any chance of seeing you tomorrow sometime (0.5) morning or before the seminar
(1.0)
R: Ah um (.) I doubt it
C: Uhm huh
R: The reason is I'm seeing Elizabeth
(Levinson 1983 p308)

In the above example, the non-compliance with the request is marked by delay, hesitation and a non-minimal turn which characteristically mark dispreferred second pair parts from their preferred alternatives (Levinson op cit p308 & p334). A pre-request therefore explores the possibility of non-compliance with the projected request by addressing in its content the possible grounds for non-compliance, and the projected sequence will be aborted if these are indicated (Levinson 1983 p358), as the following

extract demonstrates:

(2) (111) Merritt 1976: 325
C: Do you have Marlboros?
S: Uh,no. We ran out
C: Okay. Thanks anyway
S: Sorry

(Levinson op cit p358)

In this way, the pre-request sequence-type follows the general pre-sequence pattern described by Terasaki:

> 'Pre-sequence initiations are a major first-speaker technique for discovering in advance whether the production of the projected sequence's first pair part is warranted'
> (Terasaki 1976 p14)

with the occurrence of the projected sequence therefore contingent upon the response to the pre-sequence first.

Although with other pre-sequence types a negative response to the pre-sequence first will often produce a report of what the projected sequence would have been (Levinson op cit p347), it seems that this is not so common following a negative response to a pre-request:

(3) (110) 170
[T1] A: Hullo I was wondering whether you were intending to go to Popper's talk this afternoon
[T2] B: Not today I'm afraid I can't really make it to this one
[T3] A: Ah okay
[T4] B: You wanted me to record it didn't you heh!
[T5] A: Yeah heheh
[T6] B: Heheh no I'm sorry about that, ...

(Levinson op cit p358)

In this extract the initiating participant A demonstrably avoids reporting the projected sequence at T3 and it is the recipient B, rather than A, who produces the report of the projected sequence. The 'transparent' nature of pre-requests (Levinson op cit p358) does not seem sufficient to account for

this, as this non-reporting pattern is not observed for example in pre-invitations (Drew 1984), and it may be that requests are themselves such a dispreferred activity that their reportings are also avoided. I have found only one example of a reporting of a projected request sequence:

(4) [TCI(b):7:1-2]
L: Are you si::ck,
C: 'tch u-Yeh I got the flu.
L: Aoh:::::.uh|hnh|hnh ha ha-ha-ha
C: |h- |hhhhhh hh-hh-hk
(.)
C: |'hh
L: |Well that ni:ps it in the bu:d, 'hh I was gonna ask you if you could keep Jo:dy for a c(h)ouple hours but you can't if you got the flu::.
C: 'tch I wouldn't want him around me ho:n, 't|'hhhhhh
L: |nNo::::
(Jefferson & Lee 1981 p404)

This extract comes from the beginning of a telephone call after the caller (L) has identified herself, thus occupying topic initial position in the conversation. What is noticeable here is the response to the news that C is sick: there is no immediate expression of sympathy or interest but simply an orientation to the implications of this for L's projected request, explicitly stated in the phrase "that nips it in the bud" followed by a reporting of the projected sequence.

According to Sacks (see page 6), there is also a preference ranking operating at sequence-type level between requests and offers (presumably because of the relative face-threatening nature of requests), with the result that following a pre-request an offer from the recipient is structurally preferred to the projected request from the initiating participant. This is demonstrated in the following extract:

(5) (80) 176
[T1] C: Hullo I was just ringing up to ask if you were going to Bertrand's party
[T2] R: Yes I thought you might be

[T3] C: Heh heh
[T4] R: Yes would you like a lift?
[T5] C: Oh I'd love one

(Levinson 1983 p343)

At T3, C demonstrates through hesitation that the sequence-type projected at T1 is dispreferred; the pre-request enables the recipient to infer the unstated request and make the conditionally relevant and conversationally preferred offer at T4. C's acceptance of this offer at T5 provides futher evidence of the participants' mutual orientation to this preference ranking operating between requests and offers as sequence-types.

These preference organizations combine to make pre-request firsts a powerful interactional device, and Levinson has argued (Levinson op cit pp 362-3) that because of this, pre-requests (as 'position 1' turns (Levinson op cit p361)) can be specifically designed to invite 'position 4' responses (ie a response to the projected or actual request) in second turn, thereby avoiding either a request or an offer: the pre-request alone is sufficient. Levinson uses several examples to illustrate this argument, but his interpretation of these extracts seems problematic to me as it fails to take into account the notion, central to CA and ethnomethodology, of 'participants' own categories' (see page 9). In two examples that Levinson compares:

(6) (108) (Merritt 1976: 324)
Position 1: A: Hi. Do you have uh size C flashlight batteries? ((PRE_REQUEST))
Position 2: B: Yes sir ((GO AHEAD))
Position 3: A: I'll have four please ((REQUEST))
Position 4: B: ((turns to get)) ((RESPONSE))
(Levinson op cit p 357)

(7) (117) (Sinclair 1976: 60)
S: Have you got Embassy Gold please? ((POSITION 1))
H: Yes dear ((provides)) ((POSITION 4))
(Levinson op cit p 361)

the initating utterance is oriented to by the co-participants in (6) as a pre-request and in (7) as the request itself (as I have defined the term). (A similar problem arises with extract (121):

(8) (121) Sinclair 1976: 68
S: Can I have two pints of Abbot and a grapefruit and whisky? ((POSITION 1))
H: Sure ((turns to get)) ((POSITION 4))
((later)) There you are ...
(Levinson op cit p362)

Here again, Levinson refers to the initiating utterance as a pre-request, but the co-participants themselves demonstrably orient to it as a request.) Levinson however argues:

> 'the difference between, for example, (108) and (117) is simply that position 2 and position 3 turns are missing in the latter. Since (117) might very well have run off similarly to (108), it would be a post-hoc distinction to say of the first turn in (108) that it is a pre-request while to say of the first turn in (117) that it is an indirect request'
>
> (Levinson op cit p361)

From a CA perspective, the whole point is that (117) did not run off similarly to (108), and there is in fact a difference between the two extracts which may well be crucial to an explanation of why the co-participants oriented to the two initiating utterances as they did: in (117) the initiating utterance uses turn-final 'please', a token which I suspect may indicate that compliance with the request is expected by the initiating participant (particularly when used turn-finally); it is interesting to note in this connection that in (108) the third-turn request uses 'please' in this way. Although I am hesitant to draw parallels here with children's use of 'please', it is of note that Wootton makes a similar observation regarding the compliance status of child requests:

> 'It is in such an interactional context, a context in which the child has no basis for supposing the parent to be unwilling to grant the request, that "please" can, and frequently does, occupy final turn position'
> (Wootton 1984 p152 - emphasis added)

I suspect that Levinson's insistence that (117) is a pre-request relies rather heavily on the linguistic form of the utterance, whereas a CA analysis (to borrow from Terasaki: for 'announcements' read 'requests') should be able to:

> 'avoid an entirely content-based definition of [announcements] because it appears that features of the design and placement of the item in the overall structure of the conversation contribute as much to its recognition as do content considerations'
> (Terasaki 1976 p6)

(and 'please' may be one such design feature for requests). Similarly, I think that Levinson's interpretation of the initiating utterance of extract (121) as a pre-request addressing the 'possibility' factor is based on linguistic rather than interactional criteria (the interactional implication of such an exponent has already been discussed on page 12). However, in the following extract, a pre-request does result in a (delayed) second-turn position response to the projected request:

(9) (UH:24)
M: Wuhddiyuh doing wih dat big bow-puh-tank. Nothing?
(0.5)
V: ((COUGH))
V: Uh-h-h,
(1.0)
V: I'm not intuh selling it or giving it. That's it.
M: Okay

A crucial difference here to the above examples given by Levinson is that the pre-request in T1 has a turn-final 'inbuilt answer' ("Nothing") to itself. The recipient V then has to address in T2 both the pre-request

itself and the initiator's expressed anticipation of his own response to it, an overt expectation which effectively short-circuits the interaction (and possibly makes conditionally relevant the projected request). This is revealed by V's eventual response which is demonstrably oriented to the projected request, an interpretation M acknowledges in his closing use of "Okay". I would therefore argue that although the claim Levinson has made, that pre-requests can be specifically designed to invite a second-turn response to the projected request, can be shown to hold in certain circumstances (and Levinson himself uses this last example on p362), it seems to me that these circumstances are rather different to those put forward by Levinson himself: they appear to rely crucially on the design of the initiating utterance and its ability to short-circuit the projected sequence through explicit anticipation of the recipient's response.

From the CA literature on request and pre-request sequences, the following points arise: firstly, there is no interactional definition of 'request' in the literature; secondly, from studies of child-adult interaction, it appears that power balance can be a major factor affecting interaction where requests are involved, and this has implications for adult-adult interaction where there is power imbalance; thirdly, the design of a request may display the initiating participant's orientation to whether compliance with the request is expected (the compliance status of the request) and the recipient's response may be similarly designed to display this orientation; fourthly, pre-requests are a powerful interactional device which seem to be designed to address two preference organizations: the dispreferred status of request non-compliance and the preference-ranking operating between offers and requests as sequence-types following a pre-request first; fifthly, it seems that the dispreferred status of requests extends to reportings of requests following a negative

response to a pre-request; and lastly, pre-requests can be specifically designed to avoid an offer or request altogether by short-circuiting the interaction and making relevant a response to the projected request in second turn.

DATA ANALYSIS

The data used here for analysis comes originally from John Heritage (to whom I am indebted) at the University of Warwick, and was passed to me by my supervisor John Local. It comprises audio-tapes and transcripts of telephone conversations made by individuals apparently from one family-household. In some respects therefore the data is very limited (for example with regard to socioeconomic class and variety of speakers) and there may be a danger of individual idiolects being disproportionately represented. Being restricted though, the data does have on the other hand the advantage of minimizing certain variables which could affect the interaction. The data sample is too small for any wide-ranging claims to be made as a result of this data analysis; it should however prove useful as an initial investigation into the phenomenon under study. The data extracts referred to in this section are further listed in Appendix I, and the transcript notation used is described in detail in Atkinson & Heritage (1984) pp ix-xvi.

One major advantage of using telephone conversations as the data source was thought to be the absence of any visual cues (such as paralinguistic or proxemic factors) which give a further dimension to face-to-face interaction: in telephone conversations the co-participants only have the verbal interaction (or lack of it) available for interpretation, and this seemed to provide a delimited, self-contained area of conversational interaction for the analysis I wished to undertake.

What I was originally looking for in the data was instances of request sequences (without any pre-sequencing) or pre-requests which (according to the analysis outlined earlier) resulted in either an offer or

a request from the relevant co-participant. Specifically, I wanted to see if I could find in the data:

(i) evidence to support the interactional pattern put forward by Sacks (see page 6)

(ii) evidence of the importance of sequential context in determining the appropriateness of a request

(iii) evidence that features of the design and placement of a request (with no pre-sequencing) or pre-request sequence first pair part provide for its recognizability by the co-participants

(iv) evidence that requests may themselves constitute a dispreferred conversational activity

(v) evidence that recipients demonstrate in the design of their responses an orientation to the 'compliance status' of the request (and that the initiating request may be similarly designed)

(vi) (although this may not be a legitimate CA topic for investigation) evidence of any preference for use of certain linguistic forms in the realisation of requests

The first problem that arose in the initial data search for request and pre-request sequences was the apparent lack of them, and it soon became obvious that this was partly due to the nature of the interaction in telephone conversations generally. In service encounters, for example, (on which much of the literature on pre-requests is based) there is the immediate pragmatic context of the request together with its interactional expectations: because of the nature of the encounter (see

page 14), the request is licenced (by which I mean that the initiating participant has a right to make the request) and compliance is expected; if there is any doubt about the possibility of compliance, a pre-request sequence will address this problem. By contrast, interaction in telephone conversations is not face-to-face nor with an immediate pragmatic context, and although several of the conversations in the data here could be classed as 'service encounters' of various kinds, the kind of request being made does not have the same pragmatic immediacy as those detailed for example by Merritt (1976 pp 324-5). The requests in the data here are almost without exception directed at extracting a commitment from the recipient to perform a task at some future point (a possible exception being extract (E) below, as the recipient briefly leaves the telephone following the request in an attempt to carry out the requested action). The following extracts contain the only overt requests I have found in the data (marked with arrows; those marked with asterisks will be discussed later):

(A) (Heritage:OI:7:4)

G: ·hh So: uhb (0.2) ẹ-ha-ẹ-Sh'l I give yuh huhr nahmber in Germany?
(0.5)
J: i-eYES okay? en: then then:: what suh so (.) we c'n
(0.7)
->G: If you c'n|ring
J: |find hu|hr'n js soht'v
->G: |If you c'ring uhr on † Satihday if yer free: ah min thehr en ah:r ahead'v us they ahr nahr about twenty to:
J: Yeeah.
G: ·h w'tever ih ti:s, ·hhhhh
J: Oka:y,

(E) (Heritage:I:3:6)

->I: =Uh: well look ·hh uh ahs|k Joe what sor-
(L) |(°Okay°)
I: uh what time he'll be cz (see) I want tuh be he::re,=
* L: =°Think he's jis gone (missing hold on).°
(1.0)
L: °Just left the room.°

(F) (Heritage:I:6:2)

E: He'll be back agay:n tomorro:w,
H: O:keh-eh Oh he i:s coming back t'|morrow i|s he?
E: |'t! |He'll be
-> beck agayn tomorrow I would think about mid da:y so if you: you could pheo:ne throu:gh,
(0.5)
E: uh this ti:me tomorrow? cou|ld you?
H: |O: kay I will do.

(I) (Heritage:III:1:2:1)

((opening not recorded))

->D: I wantchu to telephone (0.3) the clinic tomorrow, (0.9) and ụ speak to: (0.2) Doctor Pemberton's (0.3) secretary (1.0) en tell him, (0.4) thet ụ-I've got (0.3) a veddy ba:d (.) hand.
(1.0)
D: End uh: (0.7) it's all swollen and (0.3) verry (.) hot. (0.4) eh: en I do:n't want [any pills]. But (.) can'e: (0.3) give [me] (0.3) eh-ah- some idearr of what (0.2) I c'n bu:y in the way of a [pomade].
(1.0)
E: Awright which ha:nd is it.
(0.4)
* D: Wait a minute,
(0.3)
D: mah-
(1.0)
D: Joa:n says she's sure it's ahr:thritis...

(K) (Heritage:III:1:4:1-2) (d = desk)

E: Uh:m: (0.3) my ↑ mothah phoned the othuh da:y she's staying with: a: uh a daughter of huhrs in Amuhshum: (0.4) tuh sa:y that am: (.) hh (0.3) she's having a problem: ụ-with uh huhr right ha::nd, (0.3) ...
'
'
'
->E: Uh::m (0.2) Now she is wond'ring whethuh the doctuh would uh would °eh° (.)°°well°° give huh:r 'h en indication of uhm:: (.) 'hh of a-a-a a sohrt of: uh medicine thet she c'n bu:y from: the chemist. She doesn' want any mohr ↓ pills.
(0.6)
E: If this is °possible.°
(0.6)

E: Ah:m: I-I'm thinking of'n ↓ ointment perhaps:.
.
.
.
->E: Uh::m (0.9) e-ehhhh Perhaps uh p'raps you'[d] be kind enough to mention this to him:,
(0.4)
E: uh when he comes in:?hh
* d: W'l: juh- Will you hold [the line] ...
.
.
.
->E: Well it's it's just something thet thet thet if he could ·hh recommend something thet she c'n go out'n buy f'm the chemist you know buhcuz she won't be back until Mondee,
* d: ( ) just (one) moment (please),

(L) (Heritage:V:2:6:6)

J: and uh [bits and pieces] she's left ah mean I'm quite (prepared) I mean I c'n get th'm in the cupbuhds no:w=
I: =eeYe:s.Yeh |·hh
J: |↓So|:
I: |If you have anythin:g Joyce thetchu ·hh ah:m thetchu don't wa:nt, ·hh ah: wehr(g) we're having en auction: fer the C'nsuhrvative Pahrty:
J: ↑Oh:.
(.)
I: ·t uh: in Ju:ne |fohr the:, fuh the disabled.
J: |( ),
J: Yes,
(.)
->I: ·t The handicapped 'n the disabled. ·hhh En ah'd be terribly grateful fer anything you've go:t.
J: W'l [it'd have to be] (.) rahtuh ni:ce though wouldn't it? ohr not necessarily.
I: Uh:m ·hh well u-ih tisn't a jumble sa:|le.
J: |No.
.
.
.
I: ·h linen ohr: anything like |that.
J: |Something like thet ah'll have a look around I'll see w't I c'n get

In extracts (A) and (F) the request sequences are both prefaced by pre-requests. In (A), the pre-request is constructed as an offer (S action, non-S benefit), but as the recipient J fails to realise the

implications of this ("then what so we can-") the initiating participant G makes explicit the request "if you can ring", which when J still shows signs of not grasping ("find her and just sort of-") is repaired in overlap which then gains the turn and finally extracts the compliance token "Okay" from J. In (F), the pre-request "He'll be back again tomorrow" is similarly constructed as a prompt for the recipient H to respond to with an offer, but as in extract (A) the recipient fails to do this and the initiating participant E then has to make explicit the request "if you could phone through". The pause after "through" demonstrates that H does not immediately comply with this request (cf extract (E) where the compliance is in overlap), and it is only when the request form "could you" is used as a tag that a compliance is extracted ("Okay I will do"), this time in overlap. The fact that in both (A) and (F) the recipient's compliance is delayed adds weight to the argument that the pre-request in each case was designed to prompt an offer but the recipient wa: reluctant to do this; an overt request was therefore produced by the inititaing participant as predicted by the interactional pattern put forward by Sacks.

An interesting comparison with (F) is (G):

(G) (Heritage:I:6:7)

I: eeYup. Yup. 'hhh Well now look ẹ-Jeremy said he'd be back t'morrow morning actually,=
H: =Ye:s,=
I: =I should imagine he pobly be back about lunchti:|me.
H: |Ah:
hah?
I: |He:-
H: |Shall I give a ring then.
I: eeYah. 'hh=
H: =Okay,

This extract is actually from the same conversation as (F): H is the same interactant but I has replaced E (I is E's wife and friendly with H; E was

previously unaware that he knew the caller). In this extract, which is on exactly the same topic as (F), the first turn is the pre-request, but as in (F) this initially fails to elicit an offer from H. The initiating participant in this extract however demonstrably holds back in her next two turns on the projected request, and it is not until then that H makes the offer "Shall I give a ring then". This may be to do with the fact that I and H are friends and that in extract (F) E was unaware at the time that he knew the caller; the interaction was therefore a kind of service encounter in that (as far as he was concerned) he was simply talking to one of his son's clients, a role-relationship that would perhaps licence his request. Extract (A) is also a kind of service encounter; although the interactants seem quite friendly, they are not on first name terms (evidenced elsewhere in the data) and the content of their conversation is business-related. These extracts indicate that although overt requests are themselves dispreferred, they seem less dispreferred when the interactants do not know each other or do not know each other well, a relationship that is a particular characteristic of service encounters and would explain such interaction in terms of recipient design and the degree to which compliance with the request can be assumed, rather than in terms of situational context (see also page 17).

In extracts (E) and (I) there is apparently no pre-sequencing to the requests. However, in (I) the opening part of the conversation has not been recorded and it is therefore impossible to tell whether the request was prefaced in any way; in (E) the turn containing the request first part marks a topic shift back to that of a previous section of the conversation (extract D below) in which these arrangements were being discussed:

(D) (Heritage:I:3:4)

I: ·uhhhh ·mpt W'l look uh::m
(0.8)
I: ·mk Kah- eh t'morrow's Fri:day isn|'t it.h
L: |Yah.
I: ·hhh Uh:m: (.) no:w u- can you come over in the morning? or the ahfternoon bih|cuz
L: |Ah:'ll haftih consult [Sir::]
I: eeYah. B'gz ah'll tell you what I:- uh ·hh I've got Meeuls on Wheeuls in the morning b't Edgizn might do that for me.
L: ·h Oh don't worry abou:t that if we came we'd leave her en go:.

L has therefore previously indicated that she would have to consult (Sir/Joe?) before making a definite arrangement, and so I's request in (E) has guaranteed compliance status, a fact which may partly explain the immediate compliance in overlap.

In extract (K), the first request is unusual in that the initiating participant E is talking to the doctor's receptionist d, yet the requested action is of a third party, the doctor. Furthermore, E is phoning on behalf of another third party, his mother. The request is therefore twice removed from the actual participants, but the unspoken request here is that the receptionist pass on this message from E to the doctor, a request that is only later made explicit (the second arrowed request) in the face of continuing non-response from the receptionist. The last request by E is a reiteration of the first, again a prompt for some kind of action from the very unresponsive receptionist.

In (L), the pre-request "if you have anything Joyce that you don't want, we're having an auction for the Conservative Party" is sequentially relevant to the preceeding talk because of the previous topic (clearing out cupboards), and because of the co-participants' shared knowledge from that talk, has a good chance of receiving a favourable response. Again, it

seems that this pre-request is designed to prompt an offer, but the only responses forthcoming from J are "oh" and "yes", both of which are followed by micropauses indicating a reluctance to volunteer the offer which would obviate the projected request. This finally comes in the formulaic phrase "I'd be terribly grateful for anything you've got" which is conventionally recognised as a request and is so oriented to here by the co-participants. J's previous reluctance to produce an offer is then made explicit following the request, and the possibility of non-compliance is further displayed in the closing "Something like that I'll have a look around I'll see what I can get" which as a non-minimal turn component indicates a dispreferred alternative.

One further point that arises from these extracts is the use of formulaic request firsts such as the receptionist's "will you hold [the line]" and "( ) just (one) moment (please)" (extract (K)), "wait a minute" (extract (I)) and "(hold on)" (extract (E)), marked with single asterisks in the data extracts:

(E) (Heritage:I:3:6) (fragment)

* L: =°Think he's jis gone (missing hold on).°
(1.0)
L: °Just left the room.°

(I) (Heritage:III:1:2:1) (fragment)

E: Awright which ha:nd is it.
(0.4)
* D: Wait a minute,
(0.3)
D: mah-
(1.0)
D: Joa:n says she's sure it's ahr:thritis...

(K) (Heritage:III:1:4:2) (fragments from longer extract (K))

(a)
* d: W'l: juh- Will you hold [the line] jst en it's Missiz
S[t]a:nt'n.
E: 'hhh Spant'n:|:
d: |Yes,

(b)
* d: Just one moment <I'll uh he's in u-actually in
suhr:gery et the moment ah'll |see'f I c'n get hold of
E: |ee-
d: |him,
E: |eeYe:s,
(.)
E: Yes.

(c)
E: ...buhcuz she won't be back until Mondee,
* d: ( ) just (one) moment (please),
(1.2)
E: 'snff °mghhm°
(17.0)

In addition to the above fragments taken from previously cited extracts, there are the following:

(N) (Heritage:I:6:3)

E: Dju wantuh speak tuh huhr the:n?
(0.2)
H: |Uh:m
* E: |Justa(m) Heuhr she is, hang on,
(1.4)
I: Hello:?

(Q) (Heritage:III:1:2:4)

E: ...|apahrt fr'm that are you okay?hhh
(D) |( )
D: Yes |thank you,
* E: |h e h e h 'hhh Ri:ghtoh give ahr love tih Joa:n
then please,
D: Yes.
E: hu-Ri:|ght,
D: |I will.

In contrast to the request and pre-request sequences discussed earlier, these formulaic requests appear to have quite different characteristic features: there is no pre-sequencing and there is either no response (as in extracts (E),(I),(Ka),(Kc), and (N)) or the response is "yes" (extracts (Kb) and (Q), although in both (Kb) and (Q) other factors appear to prompt its occurrence: in the former it seems that "yes" is an acknowledgment of the account following the formulaic request rather than of the request itself, and in the latter "yes" may be an orientation to the pre-closing nature of the sequence (Schegloff & Sacks 1973; see also page 41)). In terms of content, with the exception of (Q) these are all formulaic requests for the recipient to wait, and it seems that (in English at least) no acknowledgment of this request is necessary.

The linguistic realization of these formulaic requests is an imperative in (E),(I),(N), and (Q), includes turn-final 'please' in (Kc) and (Q) (in fact both in (Q)) and 'will you' (which is linguistically similar to an imperative: (Leech (1971 p78) describes it as a 'politer substitute for an imperative') in (Ka). Although (Kb) has none of these features, the phrase 'just one moment' is a conventionalized request to wait, and it may be significant that in place of the turn-final 'please' in (Kc), there is a turn-final account provided of why the caller should wait, and it is this that the caller responds to with "yes". The incidence of turn-final 'please' in extracts (Kc) and (Q) is noteworthy: 'please' is not found elsewhere in the data, turn-finally or otherwise, and in both instances here, it is used turn-finally with guaranteed compliance status in request turns that are formulaic. These features support the arguments put forward earlier arising from the CA literature (page 22) that turn-final 'please' is used in cases where the request has either expected or guaranteed compliance status.

The fact that in most of these formulaic request sequences no response is thought necessary by either co-participant indicates that compliance is assumed by the initiating participant (as I have previously argued for turn-final 'please') and this may be the factor which licences the use of the imperative as the favoured linguistic realization in these requests (I shall be discussing this and the use of 'yes' as a response in more detail later in connection with confirmation requests). As conventionalized requests, it may also be that these formulaic turns are licenced in a way that other non-conventionalized requests similarly formatted might not be (although I suspect that assumed compliance status is a major determining factor in the appropriateness of such requests).

In addition to these overt requests, I have found the following extended sequences which seem to avoid any actual request yet still manage to achieve the interactional objective of a request as defined earlier (page 13):

(C) (Heritage:I:3:2-3)

I: =Well now look d'you want me ti|h come over'n get her?
(L) |°( )°
or wha:t.
L: ↑ Just please yerself she:'ll be we were g'nna
t-bring'er ↑ back b't chor very wel|come
I: |No well when'r
you when'r you going to bring her ↓ ba:ck.=
L: ='hhh Uh well you said wait til ah:fter the New ↑
Yea:r.
(0.2)
I: Yeh.well ah mean you-you:- you choose the da:y.
(0.2)
L: Oh:ah°mean° t'morrow will do ez far ez I'm |concerned=
I: |T'morrow =
I: =That's fi:ne.

(G) (Heritage:I:6:7)

I: eeYup. Yup. 'hhh Well now look ę-Jeremy said he'd be back t'morrow morning actually,=
H: =Ye:s,=
I: =I should imagine he pobly be back about lunchti:|me.
H: |Ah:
hah?
I: |He:-
H: |Shall I give a ring then.
I: eeYah. 'hh=
H: =Okay,

(J) (Heritage:III:1:2:3)

D: And Edgerton (.) uh you did say thet you had some (.) apples: to spaiuh didn't you?
(0.6)
E: 't'hhh Well just a fe:w no::w |just a verȩy fe:w
D: |Oh:.
bihcause ah we we've giv'n most th'm awa:y.
D: Oh: I see.
(0.2)
D: Oh aw|right,
E: |But but uh:m
D: Yes. It|'s not
E: |Th-
E: I c'n take I c'n take a fe::w,
D: Yes.
E: A coupla dozen thet's about a:ll,
D: Yes.
(.)
D: Alright,
(0.3)
E: Yah,
D: Thenk you very much,

In (C) the first turn is the pre-request, an apparent offer ("do you want me to come over and get her?") followed by a tag ("or what") which demonstrates an orientation to other possibilities, presumably designed to prompt an offer from the recipient L. When L displays a report of a previous intention to carry out the action ("we were going to bring her back") followed by an acceptance of I's offer ("but you're very welcome"), I immediately (in overlap) negates this possibility with the explicit

negative particle "no" and treats the reported prior intention as still currently valid, evidenced by "when are you going to bring her back". What is remarkable about the interaction here is that I goes from a pre-request to an explicit assumption of an offer, an offer that was not in fact made, yet both participants go along with this interpretation and I achieves her interactional goal of getting L to bring "her" (the dog) back without either making an explicit request or even prompting an offer. The probable reason for the success of this strategy is that as with extracts (A) and (F), this is actually a kind of service encounter in which I, although demonstrably on very friendly terms with L, is the customer. It seems likely that this latter role-relationship is sufficient to licence her request as in extracts (A) and (F) (as indicated by the fact that L acquiesces in the interactional manipulation), even though in this instance the request itself is actually avoided, an outcome similar to (G) which demonstrates an additional orientation to the fact that as the two women know each other well, an overt request is to be avoided despite its licenced status.

(G) has already been discussed and provides an example of Sacks' model in which a pre-request prompts an offer, although the delay evident here in the uptake of the pre-request is further proof of the dispreferred status of requests.

In (J), the first turn "you did say that you had some apples to spare, didn't you" is a pre-request aimed at establishing the possibility of grounds for non-compliance. The pauses, inbreaths and hesitation token "well" before the response indicate that the response has a dispreferred status, and D's news-receipt token "oh" (Heritage 1984a) in overlap displays that this was not the response she was expecting. This structurally negative response (although phrased more positively in terms

of content) aborts the projected request (indicated by "oh I see"/"oh all right") yet E's following turns nonetheless display an orientation towards and finally comply with the unstated request, as indicated by D's gratitude token "thank you very much" closing this extended sequence.

In addition to the above instances of overt request, formulaic request and non-overt request sequences, I have also found the following utterances (marked with double asterisks) which appear to be functioning as requests but on closer inspection can be shown to have a rather different interactional function:

(B) (Heritage: OI:18:1)

J: Hello?
I: 'h Ja::ne?
J: Yes
I: ↓ Ah iss me. 'h Uh:m: 'h look uhwuh-uh-weh: ↑ Pat'n I uhr just off t'Newb'ry ↓ na:h?
J: Ah ha?h
I: Uh: an ((voice fades)) oo-uh ( )'hh ((voice up)) uh a:n:d um:: (0.7) uh::: Edgert'n's got t'geo eovuh to: (.) Grann ↓ y's bihcuz Molly is: ụ- ↓ ou:t.
J: Ah ha?
I: So eez geing tih have a cup'v soup with hu:hr ụ-the:ahr:. 'hh So if ↑ you come eovuh ah'll ↑ put the key unduhneath th'ma:t. 'hh Haa- you've ↑ got a k:ey though haven't you ↓
J: No ah hav'nt ah don't think ah hah:ve,h 'hh Well I HAVE somewheahr but I dun't know wher it is it's (.)
** I-I-ạ (.) I wz just on my way out I w'd be gratef'l if you put it unduh th' doh 'n (.) then ah'll look fer it w'n I git back=
I: =O:kay.

(M) (Heritage:OI:2(Ex:H:142):5)

J: Well unless I heahr fro:m you <ụ min ị-ụ-if anything happens 'n you cah:n|'t
I: |iYe:s well ↓ ah'll give you a|↓ca:ll.
**J: |Just give me a quick ri::|ng.
I: |iYes.

(O) (Heritage:I:6:10)

I: |Anyw|a:y-
H: |I'LL|Ah'll ring t'morrow lun|ch time.
**I: |You phone t'morrow about lunch time a|n' then I c'n give you'n idea.
H: |Okay
H: Alright ↓ fine.

(P) (Heritage:III:1:2:4)

E: ...en ah'll speak to: to uh: Doctor Pembuhrt'n:'s uh receptionist.
**D: Yes. Uh and uh (0.3) if (0.3) he's theah (0.3) uh (.) speak tuh him. But if he isn't theah speak (.) jus:t (.) speak tuh his secret'ry.
E: Ye|s yes,
D: |But say it's impoht'nt.
E: Yes you wan|t you want something
D: |Because I wo:n't be back'ntil Monday.
E: No ↑okay,

In (B), the apparent request "I would be grateful if you put it under the door" seems to me to be functioning more as a confirmation of I's offer ("if you come over I'll put the key underneath the mat") than a request per se. What seems to be happening here is I's anticipating a possible request from J, so that I's "Pat and I are just off to Newbury now" is a pre-sequence aimed at introducing the demonstrably problematic topic of whether or not J has a key, continued in I's next turn when J fails to grasp the implications of these pre-sequences (indicated by her responses "ah hah"/"ah ha"), leaving I to make an explicit offer (rather than one acting as a pre-request as in extracts (A) and (C)) which furthermore has not been prompted by a pre-request (as have other instances of explicit offers in the data here) from J. The problematic nature of this offer is indicated by the immediately following remark from I "You've got a key though haven't you" which displays I's awareness that the presupposition on which her offer is based may in fact be questionnable, and which finally

makes explicit the hitherto unstated problem of whether or not J actually has a key. J's apparent request is then really more of a confirmation (using a formulaic phrase which conventionally expresses gratitude) of the offer already made by I.

The apparent requests in extracts (M), (O) and (P) are all in the pre-closing sequences (Schegloff & Sacks 1973) of their respective telephone conversations and are all confirmations of previously negotiated arrangements. In each case, one co-participant confirms an undertaking ("I'll give you a call"/"I'll ring tomorrow"/"I'll speak to Doctor Pemberton's receptionist" respectively) and this is immediately followed (in overlap in (M) and (O)) by further confirmation from the other co-participant in apparent request sequence firsts ("Just give me a quick ring"/"You phone tomorrow about lunchtime"/"If he's there, speak to him..."). Linguistically, these pre-closing sequences are very interesting: the initial confirmation of an undertaking is in each case here marked in terms of linguistic content by 'I'll', traditionally defined as a modal use of 'will' indicating intention or 'intermediate volition' (Leech 1971 p78), and the apparent requests which then further confirm these are linguistically constructed as imperatives (in (O) with subject attached). As these apparent offers and requests appear to have a particular status, both linguistically and in terms of conversational structure, I propose to refer to them as 'confirmation offers' and 'confirmation requests' respectively. As confirmation of a previously negotiated arrangement (and immediately following a confirmation offer), compliance with the confirmation request is guaranteed; this is indicated by the various responses: although "okay" is used in (O), in both (M) and (P) the response to the confirmation request is "yes", a compliance token that has not been observed previously in the data for standard request

responses (although it was found in two dubious instances as a response to a formulaic request where the compliance was assumed; see page 35). Bearing in mind Wootton's comments on concessionary grantings (see page 16), it is possible that 'okay' may be one such compliance token; 'yes' however does not seem to indicate any concessionary compliance at all and this may explain its occurrence here as a compliance token in confirmation request second parts when it has not been found in standard request compliance seconds. The sequential context of these confirmation requests as pre-closing initiations (see Schegloff & Sacks 1973 p313) and their guaranteed compliance status may be the determining factors which make imperatives the preferred linguistic realization here: is this a further instance of minimal turn components being used for preferred conversational activities? (The formulaic request "give our love to Joan then please" in extract (Q) should also be considered as a pre-closing initiation; however, as it does not have other features in common with the confirmation requests here (such as confirming earlier negotiated arrangements and immediately following a confirmation offer), it has therefore been excluded from this category.)

As requests have been shown to be a dispreferred conversational activity, it could be predicted that when they do occur, they will be accompanied by the various characteristic design features which mark dispreferred turns, namely hesitation, repair, pausing and use of non-minimal turn components (as discussed earlier; see page 18). One instance of an overt request in the data here is the following:

(A) (Heritage:OI:7:4)

G: 'hh So: uhb (0.2) ẹ-ha-ẹ-Sh'l I give yuh huhr nahmber in Germany?
(0.5)
J: i-eYES okay? en: then then:: what suh so (.) we c'n
(0.7)
->G: If you c'n|ring
J: |find hu|hr'n js soht'v
->G: |If you c'ring uhr on ↑ Satihday if yer free: ah min thehr en ah:r ahead'v us they ahr nahr about twenty to:
J: Yeeah.
G: 'h w'tever ih ti:s, 'hhhhh
J: Oka:y,

Here it can be seen that the design features associated with dispreferred turns occur not with the request but with the pre-request: an inbreath, a formulation token ("so") which serves to indicate a justification of what is to follow, a hesitation marker, a pause, and finally hesitation and repair all preface the pre-request. The fact that a request is projected seems to have been oriented to by J: his response is delayed and demonstrates (in terms of content and design) confusion as to its implications. The request which then follows shows no such dispreferred design features, which suggests that the dispreferred status of the projected request has been sufficiently indicated in the pre-request first. In terms of linguistic content, the conditional clause "if you can ring her on Saturday" is never logically completed, a feature which is found elsewhere in the data and will be discussed later.

Extract (G) provides further evidence of the design features of pre-requests:

(G) (Heritage:I:6:7)

I: eeYup. Yup. 'hhh Well now look ẹ-Jeremy said he'd be back t'morrow morning actually,=
H: =Ye:s,=

I: =I should imagine he pobly be back about lunchti:|me.
H: |Ah:
hah?
I: |He:-
H: |Shall I give a ring then.
I: eeYah. 'hh=
H: =Okay,

In (G), the pre-request is similarly prefaced by an inbreath, the hesitation token 'well', topic shift markers and attention-focussing devices 'now' and 'look' and initial repair of "Jeremy". 'Now' and 'look' serve a similar purpose to the formulation token 'so' in extract (A) which marks a topic shift back to a previous (incomplete) negotiation as evidenced in the following fragment from (A):

(Aa) (Heritage:OI:7:1)

G: ...I've got huhr Germany phone numbah? 'hhh|hh
J: |Oh really?
G: She's given up wuhr:k? ...
J: Fantastic.
(0.2)
G: |°So:. ų°
J: |Gr::ea:t. That's (0.2) that's n-really good n- ...

It seems that the request in (A) was therefore prefigured much earlier in the conversation (three pages of transcript earlier, and close to the conversation opening): the inbreath after "number" and the "So" which is overlapped indicate possible earlier placements for a pre-request first, but G demonstrably fails to take these up, despite the fact that (as discussed earlier) this is a kind of service encounter. Again, it seems that knowing a co-participant well overrides such other factors. In (G), 'now' and 'look' both indicate topic shift, and again the projected sequence was prefigured earlier in the conversation:

(Ga) (Heritage:I:6:6)

I: 'hh w- Well now look Jeremy's off t'da::y,
H: Mm:.
I: Uh:m ụ-he wz theah this morning actually:,
H: Oh what a pity ...

It seems that the design of the first turn in the above extract (prefaced by an inbreath, hesitation and repair, the hesitation token 'well', and focussing devices 'now' and 'look') is sufficiently similar to that of the pre-request first in extract (G) to suggest that it may have been designed as a pre-request, but was not oriented to as such by the recipient.

From these extracts it appears that design features characteristic of dispreferred turns are found prefacing pre-request firsts. Attention-focussing devices and new topic markers are also found in this location, and it seems (from these extracts and others in the data) that a combination of these factors in telephone conversations provides for the recognizability of a pre-request first part. Once the pre-request first has been signalled in this way, extract (A) suggests that it is not then necessary for the projected request (if it occurs) to be so marked.

In terms of design and recognizability, the request in (E) forms a good contrast to the confirmation requests in extracts (M) and (O):

(E) (Heritage:I:3:6)

->I: =Uh: well look 'hh uh ahs|k Joe what sor-
(L) |(°Okay°)
I: uh what time he'll be cz (see) I want tuh be he::re,=
* L: =°Think he's jis gone (missing hold on).°
(1.0)
L: °Just left the room.°

(M) (Heritage:OI:2(Ex:H:142):5)

J: Well unless I heahr fro:m you <ụ min ị-ụ-if anything
happens 'n you cah:n|'t
I: |iYe:s well ↓ ah'll give you

```
      a|↓ca:ll.
**J:   |Just give me a quick ri:|ng.
  I:                           |iYes.
```

(O) (Heritage:I:6:10)

```
  I: |Anyw|a:y-
  H: |I'LL|Ah'll ring t'morrow lun|ch time.
**I:                             |You phone t'morrow about
     lunch time a|n' then I c'n give you'n idea.
  H:            |Okay
  H: Alright ↓ fine.
```

None of these is immediately pre-sequenced, and all three request firsts extract a compliance token in overlap, due partly at least to the guaranteed compliance status of the requests. Although the request first in (E) has been argued to have this guaranteed compliance status (see page 33), the turn containing the request is pref ced by dispreferred design features and the attention-focussing/new topic marker "look", whereas in (M) and (O) these are not found. This indicates that despite the apparent guaranteed compliance status of the request in (E), the whole issue is still under negotiation and this turn is still oriented to by the co-participants as an interactional request, in contrast to (M) and (O) where the apparent requests are confirming prior arrangements and are functioning conversationally as pre-closing initiations. It seems then that as there is no pre-request sequence in (E), the design characteristics which were found above to be associated with pre-requests are here used to preface the request itself. In (M) and (O), I suspect that compliance comes in overlap because the utterances are recognized as pre-closing turns; in (E), the compliance in overlap suggests that the design features of the prefacing are sufficient for L to identify the turn as a request, particularly as the turn marks a complete topic shift from that immediately preceeding back to a prior one in which these arrangements were being

negotiated.

Extract (K) (see pp 29-30) provides an example of an extremely long preamble to the projected request, with every turn prefaced by the hesitation marker "um" and containing other characteristic features of dispreferred turns (including non-minimal turn components). When the projected request finally does occur, it is additionally marked by the attention-focussing device "now". This seems to be an unusual example here of both pre-requests and their projected request being prefaced in this way, and may be partly explained by the fact that the recipient in this conversation is particularly unresponsive.

It seems then that the design features which characterize pre-request and request first parts and which provide for their recognizability by the co-participants are a combination of those normally associated with dispreferred turn shapes (inbreaths, hesitation markers such as 'um', the hesitation token 'well', pauses, repair and non-minimal turn components) and attention-focussing/topic shift markers such as 'now' and 'look'. The maximum co-occurrence of these tokens in the data extracts here is the combination 'well now look', used to preface the pre-requests in extracts (C) and (G). (In both cases however the speaker is I and it may well be that this is a design feature characteristic of her particular idiolect.) In addition to the attention-focussing tokens discussed here, the use of a recipient's name in this specific location can similarly serve as an attention-focussing/topic shift marker. This is demonstrated in extract (J), where the recipient's name (Edgerton) is used just prior to th pre-request (separated by a micropause and a hesitation marker):

(Ja) (Heritage:III:1:2:3) (fragment from extract J)

D: And Edgerton (.) uh you did say thet you had some (.) apples: to spaiuh didn't you?

Further evidence for the fact that these design features are oriented to by participants as prefacing pre-request (or request) first parts is provided in extracts (D) and (H):

(D) (Heritage:I:3:4)

I: 'uhhhh 'mpt W'l look uh::m
(0.8)
I: 'mk Kah- eh t'morrow's Fri:day isn|'t it.h
L: |Yah.
I: 'hhh Uh:m: (.) no:w u- can you come over in the morning? or the ahfternoon bih|cuz
L: |Ah:'ll haftih consult [Sir::]
I: eeYah. B'gz ah'll tell you what I:- uh 'hh I've got Meeuls on Wheeuls in the morning b't Edgizn might do that for me.
L: 'h Oh don't worry abou:t that if we came we'd leave her en go:.

In (D), the first turn in the extract contains many of the design components of prefaces to pre-requests, and it seems that "Kah-" (repaired in turn 2) may have been prefiguring "can you come over.." in the fourth turn. I's immediate "or the afternoon because" following "can you come over in the morning" seems to me to be an attempt to convert an utterance that was originally designed as a request (or which may have been open to interpretation as such by the recipient) into one demonstrably aimed at negotiating arrangements. If so, this would provide further indication of the dispreferred status of requests.

(H) (Heritage:I:6:9)

H: Alri:|ght? 'n a Happy New |Year ( ).
I: |U h : m |Now if: uh- If by any chahnce, (0.8) theh isn't anybody heuh I've got tih go
-> out jus fer awhi:le,| 'hh |What is your- new-
H: |Ye: |s
->I: What is your telee|phone nummuh?
H: |Well we're not on the phone y|et
I: |Ah I see:.h

Extract (H) above similarly demonstrates design characteristics of pre-request prefacing in I's first turn and an account of the reasons for the projected request in the pre-sequence, the projected request in this case being "what is your (new) telephone number". There is not the space here to go into the issue of whether or not questions constitute speech acts or directives (as claimed by Searle 1979 p14) and whether or not utterances can have multiple functions (cf Levinson 1983 p290), but it seems evident from this extract that in terms of interactional objectives, expected compliance status and design features, this utterance is oriented to as a request by the co-participants. (My personal view is that the term 'question' should be restricted to the syntactic category of interrogative statements, as this would limit the confusion in much of the literature stemming from an indiscriminate 'everyday' use of this term.)

Having argued for the recognizability of pre-request prefacing through design features such as inbreaths, hesitation markers, pauses and attention-focussing devices, it should be noted that these do not exclusively preface pre-request or request first parts. In extract (R), similar features preface a kind of request that has been excluded from this inquiry, namely the interactional request which focuses on S action rather than H action, the request for permission:

(R) (Heritage:OI:14:1)

```
  E:  Hello:?
  J:  Hello Edgerton.hh
  E:  Yes |(    )
  J:      |It's ME ag(h)ain.h'h|hh
  E:                          |°Yes.° =
  J:  =Uhm 'hh ↑look I ↑left a book.h (.) uh:m in the
      dra:wing room. 'hh Uh::,hh yihknow the [love sign]
->    book.  D↑ju think ah cood js pop eovuh'n come'n get
      it.
         (1.0)
  E:  Yes why not?
  J:  Yes you shuah?h
```

E: °Mh?°
J: Ehz ed- (0.7) Ah mean ah'll be in'n out. Okhay?
E: Ye:ehkay,

It may however be significant here that the pre-(permission) request and the permission request itself occur in the same turn, a format not observed in the standard request data apart from in (H) and (F), in the latter case due to the fact that the pre-request is repeated and expanded in that turn as justification for the upcoming request.

Similar prefacing can also be observed before the pre-sequences leading to I's offer in extract (B), but as argued previously, this extended sequence is interactionally complex and seems to be anticipating a request from the other co-participant. The dispreferred turn shapes here indicate an orientation to the problematic nature of the interaction, of which the anticipated request seems to be the major factor.

It can therefore be demonstrated that although these design features characteristically preface pre-request sequence first parts (or request first parts in the absence of a pre-request sequence), they are not confined to this specific location. Rather than being design features exclusively signalling pre-requests or requests therefore, it seems more accurate from the extracts discussed here to say that this kind of prefacing characteristically marks interaction which the initiating participant anticipates will be problematic in some way, and that as requests are particularly dispreferred, they constitute the major proportion of such projected interaction.

Linguistically, a feature of many of the requests in the data extracts here is the use of logically incomplete conditional clauses (complete version: if X then Y; the 'then Y' element is conspicuously

absent in all these cases):

(A): "if you can ring her on Saturday ..."

(F): "if you could phone through this time tomorrow"

(K): "if he could recommend something ..."

(L): "if you have anything Joyce that you don't want ..." (this last example being a pre-request rather than an actual request)

It seems that linguistically, this particular content characteristic may serve to reduce the imposition of the request. This feature was not found to be specific to any one kind of interaction, nor exclusive to any one interactant, and I suspect (on the basis of informal observation only) that it may be used quite frequently as a way of lessening the impact of an overt request.

In addition to this observation, 'could (you)' and 'can (you)' are the modals found most frequently here in the linguistic realization of overt requests (imperatives being used for confirmation requests and pre-closing initiations as discussed earlier), 'could' being used in extracts (F) and (K), and 'can' in (A) and (somewhat ambiguously) in (D). The only incidence of 'would' is found in extract (K). Notably, these are all service encounters of some kind, ranging from ones in which the interactants are on very friendly terms (extracts (A) and (D)) to those in which the request recipient is unknown (or apparently unknown) to the initiating participant (extracts (K) and (F) respectively), differential patterns that which actually reflect the use of these modals here, although the evidence is only very tentative.

In terms of the objectives of this data analysis set out at the

beginning of this section (page 27), the analysis has shown:

(i) that a pre-request will elicit an offer (extract (G)); that if this offer demonstrably fails to occur, the projected request will be made explicit (extracts (A), (F) and (L)); and that if the pre-request second indicates a negative response, the projected sequence will be aborted (extract (J)). These findings all support the interactional pattern put forward by Sacks

(ii) that the requests in the data here are almost always pre-sequenced, and if they are not (as in (E)), there has been previous negotiation in the conversation which the request refers back to via the topic shift markers in the preface to the request. It seems therefore that considerable groundwork has to be done before a request can be appropriately produced, not only in terms of immediate sequential context (pre-request and some orientation to the anticipated problematic nature of the interaction; see (iii) below) but also in terms of the overall sequential structure of the conversation (such as a preference for not producing a request at the earliest opportunity, as demonstrated in (Aa/A) and (Ga/G) when the interaction is not simply a service encounter)

(iii) that design features generally characteristic of dispreferred turns together with attention-focussing devices and topic shift markers are found to preface pre-request first parts and request firsts in the absence of any immediate pre-sequencing. It seems however that these features provide for the recognizability of anticipated problematic interaction (of which requests form the major part)

rather than requests exclusively

(iv) that in several extracts requests are avoided altogether: in (G) an offer is finally elicited after the projected request has been repeatedly avoided, in (C) the interactional objective of a request is achieved without either a request or an offer being made, in (L) a conventionalized phrase is substituted for the request itself and in (J) the request is aborted through a (structurally) negative response to the pre-request and there is then no report of the projected sequence. There is considerable evidence here to suggest that requests themselves are a dispreferred conversational activity, although the extent to which they are dispreferred seems to depend on the compliance status of the request: in service encounters, for example, compliance with a request is usually either expected or guaranteed and this seems to be a crucial factor in licencing the request. In other kinds of interaction, to assume compliance when there are no grounds for this assumption can create serious interactional problems, and it seems that in extract (D) such implications may have prompted the swift change from a structurally projected request to a negotiation initiation

(v) that there is a difference in the response tokens used in cases where it can be demonstrated that the requests have guaranteed compliance status, the responses in this instance often being 'yes' in contrast to the more frequently generally observed 'okay' which seems to imply concessionary compliance. In most instances in the data, the corresponding initiating turns are confirmation requests used in pre-closing initiations. The only design features

associated with the initiating request which seem to reflect this guaranteed compliance status are the use of the imperative and turn-final 'please', the latter only occurring in the data here in formulaic requests (extracts (Kc) and (Q))

(vi) that the use of an incomplete conditional clause for the realization of requests recurs in the data (extracts (A),(F),(K) and (L)) and it may be that this serves linguistically to reduce the imposition of a request on the recipient, and that the modal expressions 'could you' and 'can you' are the linguistic forms found most frequently in the realization of requests, with imperatives found in confirmation requests, formulaic requests and pre-closing initiations.

It should however again be stressed that the requests in this analysis come from telephone conversations and do not therefore have the pragmatic immediacy of those made in face-to-face interaction. Because of this, it may well be that the findings outlined above are specific to such interaction and I am reluctant to make any claims regarding the implications of this analysis for requests in face-to-face interaction (this would however provide an interesting line of inquiry for further research). Similarly, because of the restricted nature of the data source, these findings should only be viewed as indications of the nature of conversational interaction in telephone requests, and not as conclusive evidence of any of the phenomena discussed here.

EVALUATION OF THE PRESENTATION OF REQUESTS IN PUBLISHED ELT MATERIALS

From the CA literature on request and pre-request sequences and from the data analysis undertaken here, a number of points arise which can be used as the basis for an evaluation of the way requests are presented either explicitly or implicitly in published ELT materials.

The points arising from the CA literature which are relevant to this evaluation are the following:

(i) the sequential context of the interaction

(ii) the fact that requests are a dispreferred conversational activity

(iii) the preference-ranking operating between requests and offers as first pair parts following a pre-request first

(iv) the 'transparent' nature of pre-requests

(v) the power balance of the relationship between the interactants

(vi) the compliance status of the request (and this seems to have particular implications for the interaction in service encounters)

(vii) whether the request is licenced in any way (eg because of the role-relationship/power balance/compliance status/sequential context)

(viii) whether turn-final 'please' is used (and if so, what the compliance status of the request is in that instance)

(ix) what compliance tokens are used (eg concessionary tokens such as 'all right')

The ability to recognize a pre-request and an awareness that requests

constitute a dispreferred conversational activity (points (iv) and (ii) respectively above) are particularly important for a student's receptive competence as appropriateness is as much a question of how to react in any given interaction as how to initiate, although this recognitional aspect is often overlooked in ELT materials aimed at 'functional' teaching.

From the data analysis, in addition to the further evidence provided for the above points, the following points arise relevant to the materials evaluation in this section:

(x) that telephone requests may be organized rather differently to face-to-face requests as there is no pragmatic immediacy in the former instance

(xi) that these requests are almost always immediately pre-sequenced, and if not, then there has been previous negotiation on that topic in the conversation

(xii) that there are design and placement features characteristic of pre-request firsts which provide for their recognizability by the co-participants (hesitation, attention-focussing devices, topic shift markers)

(xiii) that certain linguistic features may be preferentially associated with request sequence first pair parts (such as the use of an incomplete conditional construction and the modal constructions 'could you ...' and 'can you ...', imperatives occurring frequently in confirmation requests and pre-closing initiations)

One question that arises here is the extent to which telephone requests resemble face-to-face requests that similarly have no pragmatic immediacy

(ie those aimed at extracting a commitment from the recipient to perform a task at some future point), but there is insufficient data for a comparison to be made as it appears that much of the data cited in the CA literature is also from telephone conversations (though the nature of the interaction is not usually stated).

These points provide the basis for the evaluation undertaken here of the way requests are presented in published ELT materials. A checklist was drawn up (see Appendix II) incorporating these points and this evaluation sheet then used for the materials evaluation. Further points included were the linguistic exponents chosen for explicit language focus (questions 1 & 2 on the evaluation sheet), and what guidelines were given to students to help choose between them (question 3). In my experience, most ELT units dealing with requests restrict themselves to exponents in which H action is explicitly built into the linguistic form of the request ie [modal + you + do + something], and having commented earlier (page 12) on the use of exponents such as 'Could I borrow/have ...' in requests, I wanted to see whether such exponents (or any other alternatives) were included in any of the materials examined. Candlin & Breen (1979) have similarly commented on the problem of functional exponents being treated as existing in a static relationship to linguistic form:

> 'The explicit purpose of these 'functional' materials is to teach language as use by means of exposing learners to a sequence of language 'functions'. Implicitly, however, the definition of such 'functions' given in the materials owes nothing to a genuine view of language as use, where an essential characteristic is a variable and unpredictable relationship between function and form.'
> (Candlin & Breen 1979 p179: original emphasis)

I believe that CA can demonstrate that the relationship between function and form may not be quite so unpredictable as Candlin & Breen claim: in the

data analysis section here, for example, incomplete conditional constructions and a preferential use of 'could you' and 'can you' were found to occur in request sequence firsts, with imperatives in confirmation requests and pre-closing initiations. However, I agree with their subsequent remark that:

> 'Thus, two myths are perpetuated: first, that there can be some predictable relationship, out of context, between a 'function' and those forms to which it is arbitrarily yoked, and, second, that 'functions' are a theoretically established and systematic framework upon which the teaching of form can be based'
>
> (Candlin & Breen op cit p179)

although I would want explicitly to include sequential context in their definition of 'context'.

Question 3 on the evaluation sheet is related to the above argument, and addresses the problem of the extent to which the methodological approach adopted in the material is process- or product-oriented (Candlin & Breen op cit pp 201-2), product-oriented materials being those which:

> 'assume that teaching is a matter of <u>transmitting</u> knowledge or information directly into the learner'
>
> (Candlin & Breen op cit pp 201-2 - original emphasis)

in contrast to process-oriented materials where:

> 'teaching is a matter of co-operative negotiation with learners'
>
> (Candlin & Breen op cit p202)

In terms of materials design, Candlin & Breen argue that:

> 'it makes sense for materials to be primarily concerned with developing the learner's underlying knowledge and abilities ... to focus on the learner's <u>process competence</u> and be less directly devoted to target performance data'
>
> (Candlin & Breen op cit p184)

a comment that reflects similar sentiments to Allwright's advocation of 'learning materials' rather than 'teaching materials' (Allwright 1981 p14). I have argued elsewhere (Scott ms p11) that ELT materials can rely too heavily on the (assumed) native speaker intuition of the teacher and thus fail to provide any guidelines for either students or teachers (particularly non-native speaker and less experienced teachers) regarding how to choose between various functional exponents, a methodological approach that is heavily product-oriented, and question 3 is in anticipation of this problem.

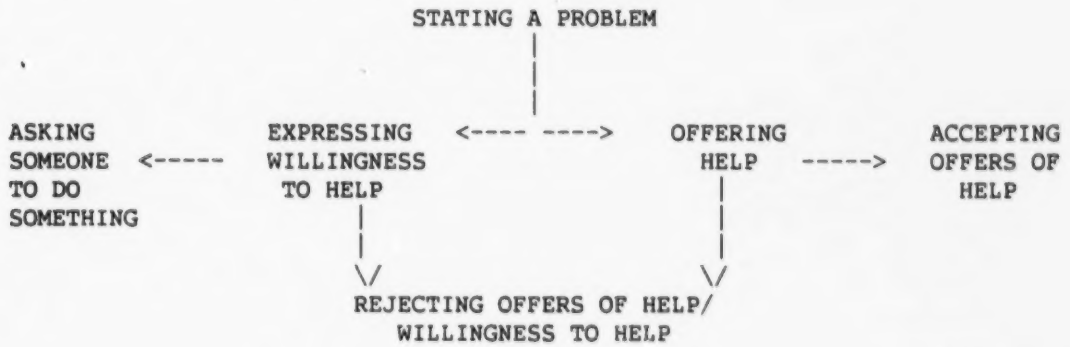
The evaluation sheet (Appendix II) was then used to evaluate the presentation of requests in nine EFL textbooks, all published within the last ten years:

Advanced Speaking Skills [hereafter ASS] (Harmer & Arnold 1978)
Building Strategies [BST] (Abbs & Freebairn 1979)
Communicate 1 [COM] (Morrow & Johnson 1979)
Developing Strategies [DST] (Abbs & Freebairn 1980)
Functions of English [FUN] (Jones 1981, new edition of 1977)
Opening Strategies [OST] (Abbs & Freebairn 1982)
Options [OPT] (Hinton & Marsden 1985)
Springboard 1 [SPR] (Boardman & di Giuliomaria 1982)
Streamline Destinations [STD] (Hartley & Viney 1982)

(The abbreviations given here will be used for convenience in referring to these textbooks.) Of these, the only textbook which seems explicitly oriented to the interactional nature of requests is FUN, the unit in which requests occur being entitled '<u>getting</u> people to do things', whereas the others (if any definition is attempted at all) are defined in more

linguistic terms as 'asking people to do things' or variations of this (ASS, BST, COM, OST, SPR).

In some instances, requests for action are incorporated into units which also include offers (ASS section 4 part 2A; DST unit 6) or which also include permission requests (OPT unit 2; STD unit 11). Those that included offers looked promising in view of Sacks' model of interaction for requests, and the discourse models given in each of the two books mentioned are reproduced here:


STATING A PROBLEM
ASKING SOMEONE TO DO SOMETHING
EXPRESSING WILLINGNESS TO HELP
OFFERING HELP
ACCEPTING OFFERS OF HELP
REJECTING OFFERS OF HELP/ WILLINGNESS TO HELP

(ASS: p93)

YOU		YOUR FRIEND
EXPLAIN TO A FRIEND THAT YOU ARE HAVING DIFFICULTY PUTTING SOME BOOKSHELVES UP	->	
	<-	OFFER TO HELP
SUGGEST A CONVENIENT TIME	->	
	<-	APOLOGISE AND SAY YOU'RE BUSY. SAY WHAT YOU'RE DOING THEN AND WHEN YOU'LL BE BACK
SUGGEST AN ALTERNATIVE TIME	->	
	<-	AGREE AND PROMISE TO CONTACT YOUR FRIEND IF YOUR PLANS CHANGE

(DST: p49)

In the first model, the request is licenced by virtue of the fact that it comes in response to the co-participant's expressed willingness to help. The request thus has expected (or possibly guaranteed) compliance status and is not therefore interactionally problematic; furthermore, 'stating a problem' is in effect the pre-request which has prompted this expressed willingness to help. However, the pre-request nature of the first move is not made explicit, and the linguistic exponents listed as possibilities for the request itself are to be selected according to various expressions of 'attitude' ranging from 'tentative' to 'blunt' (ASS pp xvii-xviii), rather than according to the compliance status of the request as a result of its sequential context.

The second model is situation-specific and students have to make their own generalizations from this. Although this model comes in the same unit as 'polite requests' (DST p47), it is actually in a subsequent part of the unit concerned with 'offers and promises' (DST p49), rather than (as one might expect) in a consolidation phase incorporating all of these. In terms of Sacks' analysis , it can be seen that the initiating move in this interactional model functions as a pre-request, to which the recipient responds with an offer, but again this is not made explicit. It is therefore evident that although both models here actually provide quite good interactional frameworks for requests and pre-requests, the interaction is not made sufficiently explicit for this point to be picked up by either students or teachers (and it may be that this was not an aspect the original materials designers were aware of). In both cases however, too many questions are left unanswered: in the first model, how does one react to a request? What do you do if the other interactant fails to express 'willingness to help'? What if the request you want to make does not relate to a 'problem'? In the second, similarly, how do you react

if 'your friend' fails to offer to help? I think these are major problems associated with situation-based models of interaction, and these problems are similarly evident in the other textbooks here which use explicit discourse models (eg BST p49; OST p97).

In contrast to situation-based models, an interactional objective-based one would be sufficiently generalized for students to apply to whatever situations they encountered. As an interactional format, Sacks' model of interaction in extended request sequences provides a good basic framework for the 'doing' of requests:

(i) PRE-REQUEST ->

<- OFFER

ACCEPT/THANK

(ii) PRE-REQUEST ->

<- NO OFFER

(REQUEST ?)

Students should be aware that either of these formats is a possible outcome following a pre-request first, and they would then be in a position to apply this generalized framework to different situations (service encounters are a possible exception here as Merritt's data suggests that these are not pre-sequenced when compliance is expected or guaranteed). The points which need to be made are that in (ii), the request itself may not necessarily be licenced if no offer is forthcoming and this will depend on factors such as the compliance status of the request; if the request is not licenced, it may be more appropriate to

rephrase the pre-request (as in (G) in the data analysis) or abandon the sequence altogether (or at least until more groundwork has been done, as in (Ga) in the analysis). Such a framework would provide students with the means to interact effectively (and, one hopes, appropriately) and to be aware of the likely impact of various interactional strategies, both theirs and other people's. This would then provide them with very necessary recognitional skills and give them the option of how 'appropriate' they might wish to be in any encounter, rather than being restricted to the 'reduced personality' of language learners as described by Harder (1980).

With regard to the exponents chosen for explicit language focus in the materials evaluated (question 1), as predicted earlier the exponents presented for the linguistic realization of requests are mostly limited to those in which the interactional agent is linguistically explicit. Imperative forms are included in some instances (ASS, OPT, SPR, STD), occasionally with a 'will you?' tag (ASS, COM, STD) or turn-final 'please' (OPT), but their use is related to categories such as 'attitude: direct and informal' (ASS), 'informal' (OPT and SPR (I guess: there is no key to the symbols in this book!)), and how well the speakers know each other (COM), whereas the evidence from the data analysis in the previous section suggests that imperatives are only used for requests in cases where compliance with the request is expected or guaranteed (for various reasons such as its being a confirmation request or pre-closing initiation). Although one should be cautious in applying these findings because of the restricted nature of the data source, they do at least suggest that such interactional considerations (which may themselves be open to negotiation) are oriented to by conversational participants in formulating their requests. None of the textbooks I have examined considers such interactional aspects, choice of linguistic exponent being a matter of

deciding between categories such as 'polite and friendly' and 'polite but formal' (DST p47) and variations on this theme. 'Could I have ...' (and 'could I possibly have ...') is used as a possible request exponent in COM, the only book which includes such an exponent in a unit dealing with 'asking people to do things' (the only other examples found are in the 'polite requests' unit of STD, which includes various interactional goals in addition to that of 'request' as it has been defined in this dissertation).

In FUN, the exponents listed for requesting are given a star rating from one to six 'according to how polite they are' (FUN p16), and it is notable that some of those in the 'least polite' category are the kind of utterances associated with pre-requests:

> * 'Oh, dear, I haven't got any change for the phone'
> * 'I don't seem to have any change on me'
>
> (FUN p16)

likely to prompt an offer from the co-participant. Again, however, these interactional implications are not made explicit, and one wonders whether such an utterance would in fact be considered less polite than, for example, 'Have you got 10p, by any chance?' (rated in the next politeness category) given the same sequential context. In the presentation, however, both these exponents are used in the realization of a request, the first as a pre-request and the second as the request itself (in the same turn):

> '...er - oh, I - I don't seem to have any cigarettes on me. Have you got a cigarette, by any chance?'
>
> (FUN p14)

a sequential organization that reflects the findings from the CA literature and the data analysis, although the list of exponents on p16 (FUN) would

suggest that they should be used as alternatives.

With regard to sequential context, there is no explicit reference to this in any of the books I have examined. In both FUN and COM however, the recorded conversational exchanges used for presentation contain implicit models which in some respects reflect the interactional framework for requests put forward in this section (as mentioned in the last paragraph). In FUN, there is a single presentation 'conversation': the interaction is face-to-face, the setting is a restaurant and all the requests have pragmatic immediacy. The main interactants are two friends, and they also interact with a waiter and other customers in the restaurant, providing a range of interaction from friends to service encounter and strangers. Of eleven requests in this presentation, four are pre-sequenced and in each case the pre-request is followed by the request itself; however, there is no model interaction of a pre-request eliciting an offer in advance of a projected request. As stated before, because of the immediate pragmatic relevance of these requests, the interaction may not follow that observed in the data analysis section and it is therefore difficult to evaluate the presentation of face-to-face requests without further empirical evidence of the nature of such interaction. However, it is notable that almost all the requests in this presentation have expected compliance status, the two which do not being:

> 'We'd like to sit near the window if that's possible'
> 'Have you got a cigarette, by any chance?'
>
> (FUN p14)

which can be said to exhibit a content-based orientation to the likelihood of non-compliance ('if that's possible'/'by any chance') and these are in fact the only requests which are not complied with, the responses demonstrating an orientation to the dispreferred status of non-compliance

with requests:

> 'er-ah-er-I'm afraid all the tables there are - are taken'
> 'I'm awfully sorry, but you see I've given up'
>
> (FUN p14)

as evidenced in CA studies.

The compliance tokens used in this presentation seem to reflect the expected compliance status of the requests: 'yes, of course', 'yes, alright', 'yeah', 'certainly, yes', 'yes, sure' and 'of course, by all means' (FUN pp 14-15), concessionary tokens not being used (except in combination with 'yes' as in 'yes, alright'). In as much as these compliance tokens are used in response to expected compliance status requests, these models reflect the findings from the data analysis. Despite the high incidence of expected compliance status requests, turn-final 'please' is not used: from the data analysis, however, one might only expect this token in formulaic requests and no such requests are found here. The interaction presented therefore seems to have quite a high degree of authenticity, but as the aspects discussed here (such as pre-sequencing and compliance status) are not made explicit in the material, one wonders whether this is a fortuitous result of good intuition on the part of the materials writers rather than from an orientation to interactional considerations.

COM is the only book which presents instances of telephone requests: there are four presentation conversations, two of which are face-to-face and two of which consist of telephone interaction. There is a variety of interaction in these models from between husband and wife (though the usefulness of this to language learners may be somewhat doubtful) to friends and service encounters. The face-to-face requests have pragmatic immediacy; those made over the telephone do not. Two of the three

face-to-face requests have expected compliance status, are realized by imperative constructions and are prefaced by the attention-focussing device 'look':

> 'Look, you wait here with the luggage'
> 'Look, open the window, will you, dear?'
>
> (COM pp 142-3)

features which were found in the data analysis, although the interaction was not face-to-face. In both instances above, the requests are in an overall sequential context where there has been previous discussion relating to the request topic which has resulted in (negotiated) guaranteed compliance status for the requests. In the first instance there is no reply to the request, and in the second the compliance token used is 'OK', a token widely found in the data analysis but one which may indicate concessionary rather than expected compliance (the findings from the data analysis were inconclusive here). In the telephone requests, one is a service encounter (hotel guest to receptionist: 'Could I possibly have a taxi, please?') with expected compliance status, which according to the findings from the CA literature and the data analysis would licence the use of turn-final 'please', and the other is reproduced below:

> A: Hello. 47653
> B: Hello. Ian? It's Gordon here. Gordon Clifford from next door.
> A: Oh yes. Hello.
> B: Look, Ian. I've got a bit of a problem. Could you possibly do me a favour? I've got a train to catch in half an hour, and I've just found the car won't start. You couldn't give me a lift to the station, could you?
> A: Well, actually, that's a bit difficult. I'm afraid my wife's got the car.
> B: Oh well, never mind. Thanks anyway. Goodbye.
> A: 'Bye.
>
> (COM p143)

The request is prefaced by attention-focussing devices 'look' and the

recipient's name 'Ian', a preamble introducing the topic, a pre-sequence explicitly projecting the request: 'Could you possibly do me a favour?', a pre-request outlining the exact problem followed by the request itself. In terms of the actual request, compliance may have been expected because the interactants are neighbours, a situational feature which would perhaps minimize the imposition of the request. Although I have no examples of the pre-sequence 'could you do me a favour' (explicitly projecting a request) being used in the data, the findings from the analysis suggest that it is more likely that the actual request might be avoided in the above example, or at least until it was evident that no offer was forthcoming from the recipient (although the use of the pre-sequence may affect this interactional pattern). The recipient prefaces his non-compliance with hesiation tokens, and the non-compliance itself is only implicit, indicated by the account provided for his inability to comply. As with FUN, the material presented here can be shown to have quite a high degree of authenticity, yet the interactional considerations which give these models their authenticity are nowhere highlighted or made explicit. A valuable teaching/learning resource is therefore wasted: these recordings provide quite good models of interaction in request sequences but the models need to be made explicit if this aspect of language learning is to be process- rather than product-oriented and concerned with developing the learner's 'process competence' as discussed earlier, a demystification process that is overdue in ELT.

One last point I wish to make in this section is concerned with the use of turn-final 'please'. Some books, such as FUN, avoid 'please' altogether in units dealing with requests; others, such as ASS, dot it around as an optional extra to be added to various exponents:

| Could you do ... (please)?| (neutral)
| Would you do ... (please)?|

| Can you do ... (please)?| (direct)
| Will you do ...(please)?|

(ASS language chart booklet p11)

Apart from the problems associated with treating 'would you' and 'could you' as equivalents (see Scott ms p12) as many books do, it seems to me that using turn-final 'please' in a request turn can have very specific interactional implications. I have argued from the CA literature and the data analysis that the use of turn-final 'please' implies that the request has expected (or guaranteed) compliance status, and if this is so, then its use in cases where there is no basis for assuming such compliance could well create interactional problems: unfortunately I have no empirical evidence to support this argument (other than the apparent restricted use of turn-final 'please' in the data samples), only my own informal observation of language learners' problems with requests and their confusion when 'please' is not the magic word which renders an utterance more 'polite' (as it demonstrably does in child language, but that is another issue).

From the evaluation of FUN and COM discussed above, and from that of the other books undertaken in this section, it can be seen that one of the major problems in the presentation of requests in ELT materials is that the presentations are often engineered to provide a context, situational or sequential, in which the requests have expected compliance status and are therefore licenced in some way (this point has also been argued with specific reference to ASS in Scott ms p12). This in itself need not constitute a problem; what <u>is</u> a problem however is that this point is never made explicit to the students, and it is therefore very difficult for them

to create similar conversational environments in which their own requests can be appropriately made.

Despite the fact therefore that in some ELT materials there is a fairly high degree of authenticity in the model interaction presented to students, what is crucially missing from all the materials evaluated here is an explicit orientation to the kind of interactional issues discussed in this study relevant to how requests are interactionally accomplished in conversation. Sequential context and the compliance status of a request seem to be the two major factors which need to be taken into account, and using these concepts in conjunction with the interactional framework for the 'doing' of requests put forward on page 63 would provide language learners with the necessary resources to interact effectively in the conversational realization of requests, both receptively and productively.

CONCLUSIONS

This dissertation has identified a number of features relating to the way requests are interactionally accomplished in naturally occurring spontaneous conversation both from the CA literature and from the data analysis undertaken here. Using these findings as the basis for an evaluation of the way requests are presented in published ELT materials, it has been demonstrated that there is no overt orientation in any of the materials examined to the kind of interactional issues discussed here. Some materials however (perhaps fortuitously) provide implicit models of how conversational interaction is accomplished: in two instances in particular ('Functions of English' and 'Communicate 1'), the models presented to the students have quite a high degree of authenticity when evaluated in terms of the findings from the CA literature and the data analysis. The major problem with such materials however is that the interactional considerations which shape the co-participants' contributions are nowhere made explicit, an approach which fails to provide students with the necessary resources to be able to interact effectively in the target language, either in terms of initiating interaction or in terms of responding to other participants' initiations.

Sequential context has been argued here to be a major factor determining the appropriateness of a request, and the findings from the data analysis support this argument in as much as the occurrence of requests in the data are almost always pre-sequenced by pre-requests, with overall sequential context licencing the request in cases where there is no immediate pre-sequencing.

The appropriateness of a request is a difficult matter to ascertain, as it is primarily a problem associated with less proficient speakers of a

language (eg non-native speakers and children), and I have no data for interaction between non-native and native speakers which might provide evidence of the interactional problems resulting from inappropriate utterances. The absence of such problematic interaction between native speakers combined with the low overall incidence of overt request sequences and their demonstrably dispreferred status does however suggest that requests may be problematic in this respect, and further research would be necessary to identify the specific features which native speaker interactants might orient to as determining the inappropriateness of any such request. Child -> adult requests provide some evidence of interaction of this nature, but because of the particular asymmetric power balance in such interaction, I am reluctant to draw any parallels here.

A further problem related to the above question is the extent to which native speakers make allowances for non-native speakers' use of language or modify their own interactional strategies when talking to non-native speakers, and again I have no data to indicate the extent of this problem. It has been argued that shortcomings in appropriateness are not tolerated by native speakers to the same extent that syntactic or lexical mistakes are, simply because the former are not such obvious mistakes to native speakers. Problems with appropriateness therefore risk being viewed as:

> 'evidence of a personal or psychological fault in the speaker rather than of a failure to cope with a genuine linguistic difficulty'
>
> (Crystal & Davy 1975 p110)

As an area where language learners can therefore expect little helpful feedback from conversational participants, there is even more reason for ELT materials to be explicit in detailing ways of accomplishing these

interactional goals.

The interactional framework put forward on page 63, based on Sacks' argument of how requests are interactionally achieved, is sufficiently generalized for language students to apply to any interactional encounter (in contrast to the situation-specific models used in the ELT books evaluated here). Service encounters however appear to follow a different format when there is expected or guaranteed compliance status for the request: in such instances there is no pre-request, and this seems to be a feature which is situationally rather than sequentially licenced.

Turn-final 'please' has been argued from the CA literature and the data analysis to have particular implications for any interaction, as it appears to be used specifically in instances where there is expected or guaranteed compliance status for the request. In the ELT materials evaluated here, 'please' proved to be a particularly problematic token, in most cases treated as an optional extra. No indication was ever given of the possible implications of using this: whether it makes no difference at all (if that were so, why use it?), whether it renders an utterance more 'polite' (as is commonly believed) or whether (as this study indicates) it makes explicit an assumption on the part of the speaker that the request recipient will perform the requested action, an assumption that would be out of place in much interaction and the request correspondingly inappropriate.

This study has indicated certain directions for further CA research into request sequences and related interactional concerns: on how requests are accomplished in face-to-face interaction, on the compliance status of requests and their associated compliance tokens, on the use of turn-final 'please' and its implications for the interaction, on how children develop the ability to interactionally manage requests according to the adult

model, on how requests are achieved in asymmetric power relationships and on the extent of the difference in interaction in service encounters.

Although this dissertation seems to have raised as many questions as it has answered, it should at least serve to indicate the kind of interactional considerations that need to be taken into account when trying to provide language students with explicit models of conversational interaction in the 'doing' of requests. The implications of an approach such as this which incorporates interactional issues into an analysis of request sequences has profound implications for ELT: the most obvious implication is in materials design, providing an empirical basis for materials evaluation aimed at determining the degree of authenticity of ELT materials. In terms of analyzing interaction however, this alone has been shown to be inadequate as the models presented to students remain implicit. An awareness of interactional issues such as those addressed in CA (and which have been shown here to have practical applications to ELT) is crucial in my view to an understanding of the nature of conversational interaction, a major concern for ELT teachers, students and materials designers.

It is therefore evident that a CA approach to conversational interaction has much to offer ELT, and when applied specifically to request sequences, provides insights into the nature of such interaction which have profound implications for the way request sequences are presented in ELT materials and how this interaction is made explicit to language learners.

APPENDIX I: THE DATA EXTRACTS

(Square brackets represent my own interpretation of the recording where there was some doubt in the original transcript)

(Aa) (Heritage:OI:7:1)

G: ...I've got huhr Germany phone numbah? 'hhh|hh
J: |Oh really?
G: She's given up wuhr:k? ...
'
'
J: Fantastic.
(0.2)
G: |°So:. u°
J: |Gr::ea:t. That's (0.2) that's n-really good n- ...

(A) (Heritage:OI:7:4)

G: 'hh So: uhb (0.2) ə-ha-ə-Sh'l I give yuh huhr nahmber in Germany?
(0.5)
J: i-eYES okay? en: then then:: what suh so (.) we c'n
(0.7)
->G: If you c'n|ring
J: |find hu|hr'n js soht'v
->G: |If you c'ring uhr on ↑ Satihday if yer free: ah min thehr en ah:r ahead'v us they ahr nahr about twenty to:
J: Yeeah.
G: 'h w'tever ih ti:s, 'hhhhh
J: Oka:y,

(B) (Heritage: OI:18:1)

J: Hello?
I: 'h Ja::ne?
J: Yes
I: ↓ Ah iss me. 'h Uh:m: 'h look uhwuh-uh-weh: ↑ Pat'n I uhr just off t'Newb'ry ↓ na:h?
J: Ah ha?h
I: Uh: an ((voice fades)) oo-uh ( )'hh ((voice up)) uh a:n:d um:: (0.7) uh::: Edgert'n's got t'geo eovuh to: (.) Grann ↓ y's bihcuz Molly is: u- ↓ ou:t.
J: Ah ha?
I: So eez geing tih have a cup'v soup with hu:hr u-the:ahr:. 'hh So if ↑ you come eovuh ah'll ↑ put the key unduhneath th'ma:t. 'hh Haa- you've ↑ got a k:ey though haven't you ↓

J: No ah hav'nt ah don't think ah hah:ve,h 'hh Well I HAVE somewheahr but I dun't know wher it is it's (.)
** I-I-a (.) I wz just on my way out I w'd be gratef'l if you put it unduh th' doh 'n (.) then ah'll look fer it w'n I git back=
I: =O:kay.

(C) (Heritage:I:3:2-3)

I: =Well now look d'you want me ti|h come over'n get her?
(L) |°( )°
or wha:t.
L: ↑ Just please yerself she:'ll be we were g'nna t-bring'er ↑ back b't chor very wel|come
I: |No well when'r
you when'r you going to bring her ↓ ba:ck.=
L: ='hhh Uh well you said wait til ah:fter the New ↑ Yea:r.
(0.2)
I: Yeh.well ah mean you-you:- you choose the da:y.
(0.2)
L: Oh:ah°mean°t'morrow will do ez far ez I'm |concerned=
I: |T'morrow =
I: =That's fi:ne.

(D) (Heritage:I:3:4)

I: 'uhhhh 'mpt W'l look uh::m
(0.8)
I: 'mk Kah- eh t'morrow's Fri:day isn|'t it.h
L: |Yah.
I: 'hhh Uh:m: (.) no:w u- can you come over in the morning? or the ahfternoon bih|cuz
L: |Ah:'ll haftih consult [Sir::]
I: eeYah. B'gz ah'll tell you what I:- uh 'hh I've got Meeuls on Wheeuls in the morning b't Edgizn might do that for me.
L: 'h Oh don't worry abou:t that if we came we'd leave her en go:.

(E) (Heritage:I:3:6)

->I: =Uh: well look 'hh uh ahs|k Joe what sor-
(L) |(°Okay°)
I: uh what time he'll be cz (see) I want tuh be he::re,=
* L: =°Think he's jis gone (missing hold on).°
(1.0)
L: °Just left the room.°

(F) (Heritage:I:6:2)

E: He'll be back agay:n tomorro:w,
H: O:keh-eh Oh he i:s coming back t'|morrow i|s he?
E: |'t! |He'll be
-> beck agayn tomorrow I would think about mid da:y so if you: you could pheo:ne throu:gh,
(0.5)
E: uh this ti:me tomorrow? cou|ld you?
H: |O: kay I will do.

(Ga) (Heritage:I:6:6)

I: 'hh w- Well now look Jeremy's off t'da::y,
H: Mm:.
I: Uh:m u-he wz theah this morning actually:,
H: Oh what a pity ...

(G) (Heritage:I:6:7)

I: eeYup. Yup. 'hhh Well now look e-Jeremy said he'd be back t'morrow morning actually,=
H: =Ye:s,=
I: =I should imagine he pobly be back about lunchti:|me.
H: |Ah:
hah?
I: |He:-
H: |Shall I give a ring then.
I: eeYah. 'hh=
H: =Okay,

(H) (Heritage:I:6:9)

H: Alri:|ght? 'n a Happy New |Year ( ).
I: |U h : m |Now if: uh- If by any chahnce, (0.8) theh isn't anybody heuh I've got tih go
-> out jus fer awhi:le,| 'hh |What is your- new-
H: |Ye: |s
->I: What is your telee|phone nummuh?
H: |Well we're not on the phone y|et
I: |Ah I see:.h

(I) (Heritage:III:1:2:1)

((opening not recorded))

->D: I wantchu to telephone (0.3) the clinic tomorrow, (0.9) and u speak to: (0.2) Doctor Pemberton's (0.3) secretary (1.0) en tell him, (0.4) thet u-I've got (0.3) a veddy ba:d (.) hand.
(1.0)
D: End uh: (0.7) it's all swollen and (0.3) verry (.) hot. (0.4) eh: en I do:n't want [any pills]. But (.) can'e: (0.3) give [me] (0.3) eh-ah- some idearr of what (0.2) I c'n bu:y in the way of a [pomade].
(1.0)
E: Awright which ha:nd is it.
(0.4)
* D: Wait a minute,
(0.3)
D: mah-
(1.0)
D: Joa:n says she's sure it's ahr:thritis...

(J) (Heritage:III:1:2:3)

D: And Edgerton (.) uh you did say thet you had some (.) apples: to spaiuh didn't you?
(0.6)
E: ·t·hhh Well just a fe:w no::w |just a verry fe:w
D: |Oh:.
bihcause ah we we've giv'n most th'm awa:y.
D: Oh: I see.
(0.2)
D: Oh aw|right,
E: |But but uh:m
D: Yes. It|'s not
E: |Th-
E: I c'n take I c'n take a fe::w,
D: Yes.
E: A coupla dozen thet's about a:ll,
D: Yes.
(.)
D: Alright,
(0.3)
E: Yah,
D: Thenk you very much,

(K) (Heritage:III:1:4:1-3) (d = desk)

E: Uh:m: (0.3) my ↑ mothah phoned the othuh da:y she's staying with: a: uh a daughter of huhrs in Amuhshum: (0.4) tuh sa:y that am: (.) hh (0.3) she's having a

problem: u-with uh huhr right ha::nd, (0.3) ...
,
,
,
->E: Uh::m (0.2) Now she is wond'ring whethuh the doctuh would uh would °eh° (.) °°well°° give huh:r 'h en indication of uhm:: (.) 'hh of a-a-a a sohrt of: uh medicine thet she c'n bu:y from: the chemist. She doesn' want any mohr ↓ pills.
(0.6)
E: If this is °possible.°
(0.6)
E: Ah:m: I-I'm thinking of'n ↓ ointment perhaps:.
,
,
,
->E: Uh::m (0.9) e-ehhhh Perhaps uh p'raps you'[d] be kind enough to mention this to him:,
(0.4)
E: uh when he comes in:?hh
* d: W'l: juh- Will you hold [the line] jst en it's Missiz S[t]a:nt'n.
E: 'hhh Spant'n:|:
d: |Yes,
,
,
,
*d: Just one moment <I'll uh he's in u-actually in suhr:gery et the moment ah'll |see'f I c'n get hold of
E: |ee-
d: |him,
E: |eeYe:s,
(.)
E: Yes.
(.)
->E: Well it's it's just something thet thet thet if he could 'hh recommend something thet she c'n go out'n buy f'm the chemist you know buhcuz she won't be back until Mondee,
* d: ( ) just (one) moment (please),
(1.2)
E: 'snff °mghhm°
(17.0)

(L) (Heritage:V:2:6:6-8)

J: and uh [bits and pieces] she's left ah mean I'm quite (prepared) I mean I c'n get th'm in the cupbuhds no:w=
I: =eeYe:s.Yeh |'hh
J: |↓So|:
I: |If you have anythin:g Joyce thetchu 'hh ah:m thetchu don't wa:nt, 'hh ah: wehr(g) we're having en auction: fer the C'nsuhrvative Pahrty:

```
  J: ↑Oh:.
        (.)
  I: ·t uh: in Ju:ne |fohr the:, fuh the disabled.
  J:                 |(       ),
  J: Yes,
        (.)
->I: ·t The handicapped 'n the disabled. ·hhh En ah'd be
     terribly grateful fer anything you've go:t.
  J: W'l [it'd have to be] (.) rahtuh ni:ce though wouldn't
     it? ohr not necessarily.
  I: Uh:m ·hh well u-ih tisn't a jumble sa:|le.
  J:                                       |No.
        '
        '
        '
  I: ·h linen ohr: anything like |that.
  J:                             |Something like thet ah'll
     have a |look around I'|ll see w't I c'n get
  I:        |Mm:.          |Yah.
```

(M) (Heritage:OI:2(Ex:H:142):5)

```
  J: Well unless I heahr fro:m you <u min i-u-if anything
     happens 'n you cah:n|'t
  I:                     |iYe:s well ↓ ah'll give you
     a|↓ca:ll.
**J:  |Just give me a quick ri::|ng.
  I:                           |iYes.
```

(N) (Heritage:I:6:3)

```
  E: Dju wantuh speak tuh huhr the:n?
        (0.2)
  H: |Uh:m
* E: |Justa(m) Heuhr she is, hang on,
        (1.4)
  I: Hello:?
```

(O) (Heritage:I:6:10)

```
  I: |Anyw|a:y-
  H: |I'LL|Ah'll ring t'morrow lun|ch time.
**I:                              |You phone t'morrow about
     lunch time a|n' then I c'n give you'n idea.
  H:             |Okay
  H: Alright ↓ fine.
```

(P) (Heritage:III:1:2:4)

E: ...en ah'll speak to: to uh: Doctor Pembuhrt'n:'s uh receptionist.
**D: Yes. Uh and uh (0.3) if (0.3) he's theah (0.3) uh (.) speak tuh him. But if he isn't theah speak (.) jus:t (.) speak tuh his secret'ry.
E: Ye|s yes,
D: |But say it's impoht'nt.
E: Yes you wan|t you want something
D: |Because I wo:n't be back'ntil Monday.
E: No ↑okay,

(Q) (Heritage:III:1:2:4)

E: ...|apahrt fr'm that are you okay?hhh
(D) |( )
D: Yes |thank you,
* E: |h e h e h 'hhh Ri:ghtoh give ahr love tih Joa:n then please,
D: Yes.
E: hu-Ri:|ght,
D: |I will.

(R) (Heritage:OI:14:1)

E: Hello:?
J: Hello Edgerton.hh
E: Yes |( )
J: |It's ME ag(h)ain.h'h|hh
E: |°Yes.° =
J: =Uhm 'hh ↑look I ↑left a book.h (.) uh:m in the dra:wing room. 'hh Uh::,hh yihknow the [love sign]
-> book. D↑ju think ah cood js pop eovuh'n come'n get it.
(1.0)
E: Yes why not?
J: Yes you shuah?h
E: °Mh?°
J: Ehz ed- (0.7) Ah mean ah'll be in'n out. Okhay?
E: Ye:ehkay,

APPENDIX II: EVALUATION SHEET

EVALUATION OF PRESENTATION OF REQUESTS IN PUBLISHED ELT MATERIALS

PUBLICATION:

AUTHOR(S) :

PUBLISHERS :

YEAR :

LEVEL :

UNIT & pp :

1 WHICH LANGUAGE EXPONENTS ARE SELECTED FOR EXPLICIT LANGUAGE FOCUS:

(a) REQUESTS

(b) RESPONSES (linked?)

(c) PLEASE?

(d) ANY SUMMARY INCLUDED?

2 ANY REQUEST EXPONENTS OTHER THAN [MODAL + YOU + DO + SOMETHING]?

3 WHAT GUIDELINES ARE GIVEN TO STUDENTS FOR CHOOSING BETWEEN THEM?

4 ANY EXPLICIT DISCOURSE/INTERACTIONAL MODEL GIVEN?

5 **PRESENTATION:**

(a) number of requests in presentation:

(b) (if more than one request) are these presented separately or in one overall context:

(c) setting(s):

(d) relationship(s) (eg friends/service encounter/power balance):

(e) face-to-face interaction/telephone conversation:

(f) immediate pragmatic relevance?

(g) are requests licenced in any way (eg in service encounter/ power relationship/sequentially)?

(h) what is the compliance status of the request?

(i) is the projected request prefaced by a pre-request?

(j) is there any example of a non-overt request being made?

(k) is 'please' used in the presentation (turn-finally or otherwise)?

(l) are there any design features characteristic of the telephone requests in the data analysis section:

- initial hesitation/orientation to dispreferred status
- attention-focussing devices (eg 'now','look')

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